

A CULTURAL
HISTORY
OF THE
OTTOMANS

The Imperial Elite
and its Artefacts

I.B. TAURIS

SURAIYA FAROQHI

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SURAIYA FAROQHI is Professor of History at Istanbul Bilgi University. She was previously Professor of Ottoman Studies at the Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich. Among her many publications are *Travel and Artisans in the Ottoman Empire*, *Artisans of Empire*, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It*, *Pilgrims and Sultans* and *Subjects of the Sultan* (all published by I.B.Tauris).

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*C. M. Woodhead, Teaching Fellow (Ottoman History),
University of Durham*

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LONDON · NEW YORK

Published in 2016 by
I.B.Tauris & Co. Ltd
London • New York
www.ibtauris.com

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The author is a recipient of the Turkish Cultural Foundation Fellowship in Turkish
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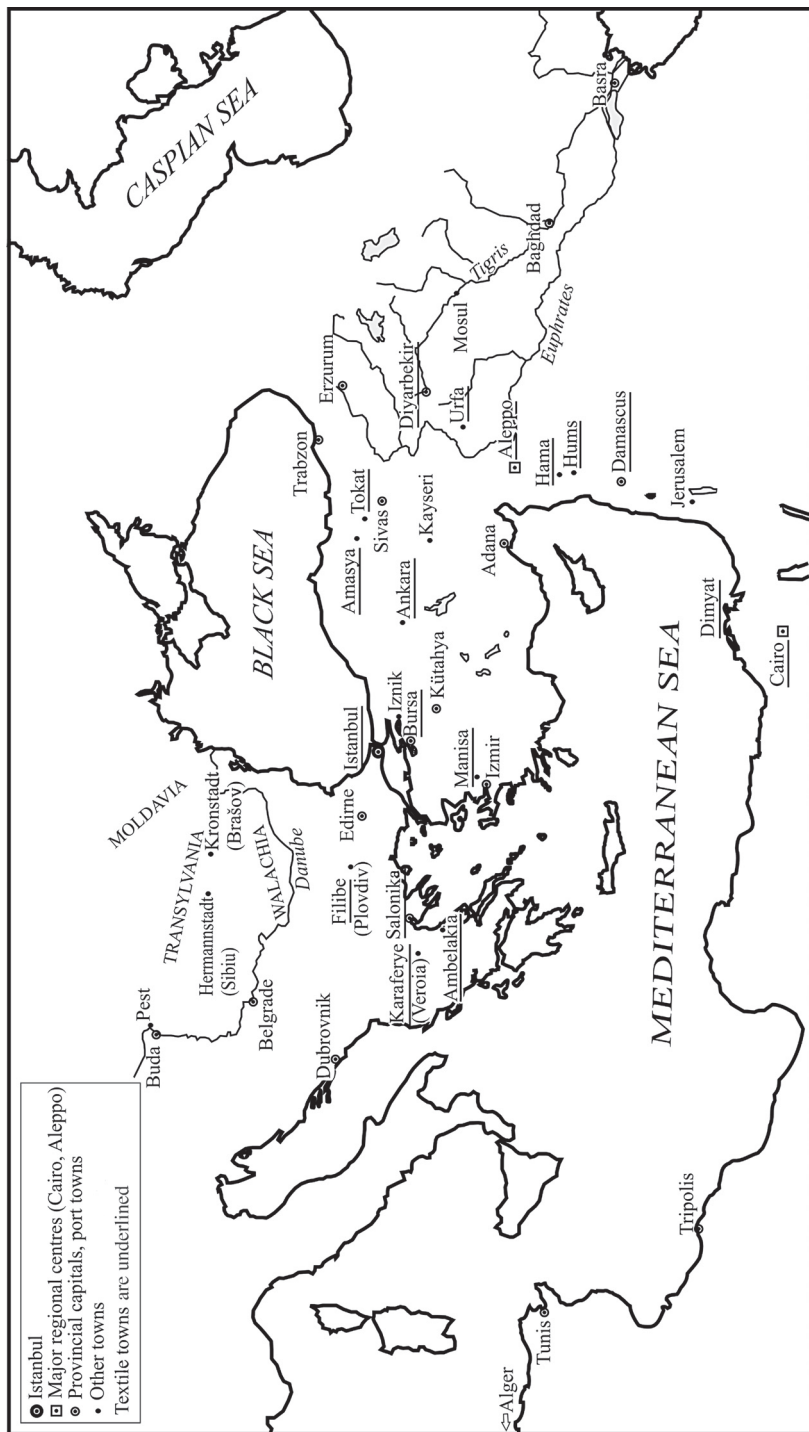
ISBN: 978 1 78453 096 9
eISBN: 978 0 85772 980 4
ePDF: 978 0 85772 782 4

A full CIP record for this book is available from the British Library
A full CIP record is available from the Library of Congress

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: available

Typeset in Stone Serif by OKS Prepress Services, Chennai, India
Printed and bound in Great Britain by T.J. International, Padstow, Cornwall

For my friend Tülay Artan



MAP Selected manufacturing centres in the Ottoman Empire (seventeenth–eighteenth centuries).

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Material culture is a relative novelty for many Ottoman historians; and the present book is the result of my efforts to familiarize my students – and myself – with this topic. Having taught a course on this subject to beginning graduate students at Istanbul Bilgi University for a number of years, I am much in their debt for the patience – and sometimes even enthusiasm – with which they have accompanied me on many forays into the museums of Istanbul, İznik and Bursa. They have listened to endless disquisitions on Kütahya faience or Anatolian carpets, which I have often dispensed with most alacrity, when my knowledge of the topic was most limited.

As I am not a museum specialist, and even less an art historian, I have much relied on the good advice of people who are. I am most grateful for the help of Lâle Görünür of the Sadberk Hanım Museum in Istanbul, whose knowledge of Ottoman textiles is prodigious; at an earlier stage, I have also benefited from the vast experience of Hülya Tezcan, until 2006 curator of textiles at the Topkapı Palace Museum and afterward an important organizer of exhibitions. Barbara Karl of the Museum für angewandte Kunst/Gegenwartskunst in Vienna, MAK for short, has provided the participants of a symposium, of which I was fortunate enough to form a part, with a dazzling overview of the formerly Habsburg-owned carpets now on show in the MAK. Anna Ballian, of the Benaki Museum in Athens when I met her, has kindly shared her articles on inscriptions by Ottoman-Greek donors of patens and chalices, and made me aware of the many pieces of Anatolian workmanship exhibited in her museum. The exhibitions organized by Nazan Ölçer at the Sabancı Museum (Istanbul) together with their catalogues, have opened new horizons and been a constant source of joy and inspiration. Nisya Isman Allovi, the director of 500: Yıl Vakfı Türk Musevileri Müzesi (Jewish Museum) in Istanbul, has searched her collection for the rare surviving

items relevant to Ottoman Jewish culture of the pre-Tanzimat period; and I am much indebted to the guidance of Ibolya Gerelyes when exploring the Ottoman holdings of the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest. Many thanks also to Tim Stanley for the guided tour of the Victoria and Albert Museum's Islamic section when it had just been reorganized.

I am also much in debt to university-based historians of Ottoman art and artefacts; and I beg their pardon for any misinterpretations on my part. Without the many studies of Nurhan Atasoy (lately of Edebiyat Fakültesi, Istanbul University) I would not have dared to undertake this project at all. Moreover, through her many publications, she has provided inspiration to all older scholars by demonstrating how much a person can achieve even after formal retirement. On a winter day in Charlottesville VA, I experienced the tireless enthusiasm of Walter Denny (University of Massachusetts in Amherst); and Amanda Phillips, now of the University of Virginia, has provided not only knowledge about Ottoman silks and velvets, but also made it possible for me to view the Middle Eastern artwork currently in the storerooms of the Museum of Birmingham, England. Eveline Sint Nicolaas (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam) has helped with information on Cornelis Calkoen, while Hans Georg Majer (retired from Ludwig Maximilians Universität, Munich) has generously shared his encompassing knowledge of Ottoman sultans' portraits, especially of those which for one reason or another have wound up in German collections. Moreover, Elif Akçetin (University of Illinois in Chicago), Stefan Hanß (Cambridge University), Amanda Phillips, Giorgio Riello (Warwick University), and Christine Woodhead (University of Durham) have had the kindness to read the text and comment on it; I cannot thank them enough. Last but not least, Tülay Artan (Sabancı University, Istanbul) has been a close friend for many years; and her knowledge of Ottoman art has been a constant source of inspiration.

A book dealing with material objects needs images; and while putting this book together 'on a shoestring', I have had help from many generous museums and their curators. A full list is part of this book; but some people have aided me to an extent that a mere mention in such a list can never be sufficient. First of all, the help of Hülya Bilgi, the director of the Sadberk Hanım Museum in the Istanbul suburb of Büyükdere, and curator Lâle Görünür, has been crucial. Yaprak Özkonu (Pera Müzesi) has generously assisted with the image of an Ottoman weight; and Ibolya Gerelyes has kindly permitted the reproduction of a drawing which shows a reconstructed Ottoman-era stove. Tim Stanley of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London has helped me out by providing images

when I managed to get stuck on the Museum homepage. At Schloss Ambras near Innsbruck, Austria, I have greatly appreciated the help of Margot Rauch and, in the Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer in Vienna, that of Stefan Krause, who provided much-needed information even though I dropped into his office without an appointment. At the Topkapı Palace Museum, Esra Müyessiroğlu has been most helpful; and Irvin Cemil Schick (Istanbul) has generously allowed me to reproduce a seventeenth-century etching from a costume book by George de la Chappelle, which forms part of his private library.

The pictures could not have been published in colour if I had not had the good fortune to receive a Fellowship in Turkish Culture and Art from the Turkish Cultural Foundation: a heartfelt 'thank you' to the administrators of that organization. Of course, the contents of this book should not be taken to reflect the views of the Turkish Cultural Foundation; in that respect, I am the only person responsible.

Many objects can only be identified because of the inscriptions adorning them; but for a non-specialist, these may be difficult or even impossible to read. Given my complete ignorance of Greek and Armenian, I have had to ask for help. In particular, I have benefited from the generous aid of Anna Vlachopoulou (LMU Munich) and Marinos Sariyannis (FORTH, Rethymno, Greece), who have made me understand just how limited our knowledge of Ottoman provincial history so often is. As for a somewhat enigmatic Armenian inscription, I am profoundly grateful for the knowledge and patience of Talin Suciyan, also of LMU.

For help with computer problems, copy editing, the procurement of books and general moral support, I am much obliged to Büşra Kösoğlu, Daniel Ohanian, and Zeynep Yeşim Gökçe (all of Istanbul Bilgi University), and also to Mustafa Erdem Kabadayı, now of Koç University, Istanbul. By her *savoir-faire*, Vera Costantini (Ca' Foscari University, Venice) has helped me to procure a crucial image. Güneş Işıksel (Medeniyet University, Istanbul) has also provided valuable feedback. At LMU in Munich, Elfie Semen, Hayim Malkhasy, Alexander Morar and Adrian Gheorge have dealt with a variety of deadlocks that would have set me back very badly, had I been on my own. Moreover, Aydın Uğur, the dean of our newly formed faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, has been constantly inspiring and encouraging. At I.B.Tauris, Azmina Siddique and Henry Howard have helped me get this text ready for the press; and I am most grateful for their support.

Last but not least, I am grateful to Giorgio Riello and Anne Gerritsen (both of Warwick University, Coventry) and to Luca Molá (European University Institute, San Domenico near Fiesole), for having invited me to

several conferences concerning the production and consumption of artefacts. These encounters have much enlarged my perspective and hopefully allowed me to go somewhat beyond the observations of an enthusiastic amateur haunting museums and exhibitions. Obviously none of these people, who have given generously of their time and expertise, are in any way responsible for any errors that may remain.

A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

People, geographical terms and items connected with the Ottoman world, including the Arab provinces, have been spelled according to the rules of Modern Turkish. For terms connected with the non-Ottoman Islamic orbit, I have generally used the spellings of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, omitting some diacritical signs. Words that have entered the English language, such as for instance *qadi* or *Kaaba*, appear as spelled in English dictionaries.

INTRODUCTION

When in around 1571, Ahmed Paşa, a prominent figure at the court of Sultan Selim II (r. 1566–74), ordered several clocks or watches from Augsburg and/or Nuremberg, he started a veritable comedy of errors. First of all, when a detailed description of one of the commissioned objects arrived in Augsburg, it turned out that nobody in this highly commercial town of some 30,000 inhabitants could read Ottoman Turkish; and the document had to be remitted to Vienna for translation. In response, the Habsburg authorities sent orders that the timepieces should be of good quality and finished within reasonable time; but the linguistic problem referred to, surely not unique, cannot have speeded up the process. A short while later, in 1573, other clocks or watches ordered by Ahmed Paşa, presumably the same person although the name is common, wound up in the hands of the influential grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa (c. 1506–79). (Incidentally Sokollu, who often placed orders in Latinate Europe, already had a German-speaking watchmaker at his disposal.) To compensate for his loss, Ahmed Paşa commissioned two further timepieces through the mediation of the current Habsburg ambassador: while the items do not survive, the drawings are still in the Vienna archives.¹

An elusive material culture

We do not know what happened to Ahmed Paşa's clocks or watches once they had arrived in Istanbul. Perhaps in this particular case, we will find out more, once work in the archives of the Topkapı Palace is more advanced than it is now. Yet on the whole, Ottoman material culture remains a relatively unexplored field.

One of the major reasons is the training of historians, many of whom focus on written sources to the exclusion of everything else. But other concerns are also involved: after all, in the Ottoman world, archival

sources are not only quite abundant, but also tell us a great deal about the functioning of society. Perhaps if these holdings had been less overwhelming, researchers would have been more eager to seek out additional sources, including objects. But as matters stand, Ottoman historiography is typically based on archival research, and even more so now that certain documents can be searched by computer. Chronicles, which for a long time had remained in the shadow, now attract some attention as well: just why did certain authors side with one or the other palace faction, whose disputes sometimes spilled over into the streets and markets of Ottoman Istanbul? This relatively novel concern with Ottoman historical writing probably results from the interest in narrative techniques and the fuzzy borders between imaginative literature and historiography, which has reached Ottomanists too, admittedly with some delay.²

On the other hand – leaving aside the rich holdings of the sultans' palace – wars, expulsions and resettlement of the former empire's Muslim and non-Muslim populations have caused the destruction of much of the material culture that must once have existed. Refugees were frequently robbed on the roads and, once they arrived at their destinations, they sold their valuables in order to survive. It is also possible that wealthy Ottoman householders tended to give away the items for which the present generation had no immediate use: many families placed no great value on retaining the grandmother's bridal dress or the fez of the great-grandfather.³

Moreover, at least in Turkey, it is only during the last few decades that certain museums have shown a sustained interest in items not destined for the sultans and their households, including for instance cushion covers, ladies' clothes, weights and steelyards, or Orthodox Church silver.⁴ Thus probably quite a few items still around in the 1950s or 1960s have become difficult to find today: once stainless steel, enamel and – for the tight budget – aluminium cooking pots had become current, many households must have got rid of their copper kettles and pans.⁵ If today's students of Ottoman history need a good deal of convincing before they will take a serious interest in material culture, this 'invisibility' of most objects used in the past is at least partly responsible.

However, artefacts can tell us things that written sources never mention, particularly where trade and other intercultural connections are at issue.⁶ Thus in the case of certain textiles, advances in radiocarbon dating have narrowed the interval between the *terminus post quem* and the *terminus ante quem* to about 50 years; and Ruth Barnes has concluded, on the basis of cottons excavated in Old Cairo (Fustāt), and currently in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, that the importation of Indian cottons into Egypt was not a novelty of the 1600s, as we might assume when

considering written evidence alone. On the contrary, Indian fabrics were already well known in late Mamlūk and early Ottoman Egypt, in other words during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁷ Moreover, Julian Raby has suggested that the relatively large quantities of broken Chinese porcelain found in the excavation of the Saraçhane neighbourhood in the centre of Istanbul may have something to do with the downturn that İznik faience suffered in the early 1600s. Once again this conclusion is based on archaeology alone; for it is by now notorious that we have few Ottoman documents shedding light on the decline of İznik ware – a development as distressing to the Ottomanist as to the art lover.⁸

However, to optimize the results to be gained from studying a given material object, scholars often must employ written documents too; for to extract information out of an object of wood or marble, we need to research where it had been manufactured and for whom. Such an investigation will be a lot easier if the object in question carries an inscription: however, such items are not very common. Moreover, we also need to figure out whether the inscription really dates to the time at which it claims to have been composed. Surprises are always possible: thus in Ankara in the 1970s, antique dealers, having noted that copper pots with inscriptions fetched higher prices, sometimes faked the names of supposed previous owners before offering the pots to their customers.⁹

If possible, the historian of material culture will thus attempt something like a 'biography' of the object in question; similarly to the gallery owner worrying about the provenance of an object to be exhibited, he/she will try to figure out who owned a given piece in the course of time and what he/she did with it.¹⁰ Put differently, the researcher will try to establish changes in function and/or meaning that went with the transfer of ownership. In the Ottoman context, in most cases such biographies are extremely difficult to compile. But there are exceptions: if for instance a carpet was donated by one imperial court to another, inventories may be of help, especially when Ottoman artwork arrived in the Kremlin; for the bureaucrats serving the tsars produced quite detailed descriptions of the diplomatic gifts entering the treasuries of Moscow, and later those of St Petersburg as well.¹¹ Given the many records concerning the acquisition of Ottoman textiles extant in Florentine archives, it may well be possible to write the histories of two Ottoman carpets that the Medici princes of Florence purchased around 1600 and whose arrival in their palace storehouse was diligently recorded.¹²

A potential reader may object that our enterprise is of limited interest, arguing that material culture cannot explain social dynamics; and, on one level, this objection is perfectly valid. However, material items often indicate social customs rarely if ever discussed in written texts; and when

we confront two or more objects, we may even be able to discern social change, albeit in an indirect fashion. Thus an eighteenth-century miniature depicting people invited to a princely circumcision and eating from blue-and-white porcelain or faience will tell us that, in those years, these plates and jugs were not collector's items stored in boxes or cupboards but actually in use, at least on festive occasions. By contrast, a nineteenth-century photograph showing a table set for guests in Yıldız or Dolmabahçe Palace will probably show that Sèvres porcelain or perhaps some products of the new Yıldız manufactures were now *de rigueur*.

These changes in consumption patterns may indicate that in the late 1800s, the Ottoman Palace wanted to convey a novel message to a group of addressees different from the guests of an eighteenth-century circumcision. Presumably in the 1700s, members of the Ottoman elite appreciated the antiquity of Chinese porcelain and Chinese-inspired İznik faience, but also the rarity of these items and their aesthetic value. By the late nineteenth century by contrast, the sultan, acting as a host of high officials and foreign diplomats, might wish to emphasize the 'modernity' of his empire; and for this purpose, displaying the latest Sèvres set, and also the products of the recently founded palace manufacture, was a more appropriate tactic. We can view this contrast as a dimension of social change at the highest levels of the Ottoman elite, reflected in material culture.

Sources written and pictorial

As noted, written sources that cover objects used by Ottomans of some wealth – the poor unfortunately almost completely escape us – are often archival; differently from what was the custom in China, literary texts concerning material goods are quite rare.¹³ Doubtless the most important type of source is the set of inventories that the scribes of local qadis compiled when the inheritance of a deceased person forming part of the taxpaying subject class (*reaya*) was to be divided among his/her heirs. As a fee for this service, the inheritors paid over a percentage of the estate to the qadi and his servitors; but recourse to the qadi's office was only obligatory when one of the heirs was absent, and/or some of them were minors. Therefore many of the surviving inventories must have concerned such cases; and the estates of travelling merchants were probably over-represented, as they were more likely than others to die far from home. Many other recorded cases must have documented disputed inheritances; and by contrast women, typically poorer than their menfolk, were under-represented to varying degrees. These limitations and those of entries in the qadis' registers in general, have interested Ottoman historians; there

are evident similarities to the value and drawbacks of English, French, Dutch or Venetian inventories of the early modern period.¹⁴

Where tax-exempt servitors of the sultans (*askeri*) – other than religious-cum-legal scholars (*ulema*) – were at issue, the ruler could in principle claim the entire estate; but it was customary, after often rather grim bargaining, to return part of it to the family of the deceased. As for the *ulema*, they could pass on their wealth to their heirs in spite of having served the monarch as judges or teachers in religious colleges (*medrese*). Therefore their names normally do not turn up in the registers of deceased *askeri*, whose inheritances were the province of a special registrar known as the *askeri kassam*.¹⁵

Given these conditions, the estate inventories in the qadi registers which survive for many of the empire's cities do not allow us to draw conclusions on the distribution of wealth or the consumption patterns characteristic of the relevant urban society as a whole; put differently, the estate inventories only document those people that they directly concern. Presumably the *askeri* registers include a sizeable share of the sultans' officials and are thus more representative of this group; for the treasury had an interest in tracking down as many goods and chattels as possible. But on the other hand, people could enter the *askeri* registers after having served the palace in a very modest capacity, perhaps as a fisherman supplying the sultan's kitchen. Therefore the registers of the *askeri kassam* do not present a neat picture of what we might call the 'Ottoman elite'.

For the historian of material life, all categories of inventories pose a challenge because the scribes often did not include the many telling details that would enable us to identify the objects in question. Thus they did not specify colours with any regularity, although in the absence of synthetic dyes of standard value, the price of the dyestuff used must have had an impact on the sale price of a given textile or leather. Neither did most scribes include references to the decorations appended to caftans, curtains or bedspreads, details which also affected prices. When it came to books, a significant part of material culture for people with an education, the scribes were often incapable of describing them; and vague remarks abounded, particularly if the books were not in Arabic but in Turkish. Moreover, the scribes used local terminology, which might vary considerably from place to place, and also from period to period; as a result, a carefully detailed study of Damascene textiles around 1700 is of but limited help to the scholar working for instance on Bursa or Istanbul in the sixteenth century.¹⁶

Mentally reconstructing items mentioned in estate inventories becomes even more difficult as the surviving objects, if non-royal, so often date back no further than the nineteenth century. Sometimes it is

unavoidable to work from the assumption that older objects must have resembled their counterparts from about 1850. But such a proceeding can be counterproductive, in that we attribute to Ottoman subjects patterns of consumption even more conservative than they surely were in real life.

Registers of administratively decreed prices (*narh*) are more helpful, as quite often they contain brief descriptions of manufacturing procedures; the scribes may even include kitchen recipes, if for instance a certain type of soup was being cooked for sale in the market.¹⁷ Moreover, these documents will also tell us that Istanbul customers could buy leather from fairly distant places including Manisa in western Anatolia; admittedly some of the goods in question may have been manufactured/dyed *à la façon de Manisa* in some locality closer to the Ottoman capital. However, the major problem is that if *narh* lists survive at all for provincial towns, they often contain only a few basic foodstuffs and raw materials and thus do not provide much information on places and types of manufacture.

On the latter issue, the regulations governing the activities of this or that guild (*nizam*) may be helpful; while in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries such regulations, if written down at all, were brief and rather unsystematic, in the 1700s Istanbul artisans especially were at times positively avid for official regulation. For the Ottoman authorities intervened in artisan disputes only when one of the parties lodged an official complaint; in such a case, experienced masters needed to detail the rules of their craft; and their statements were recorded as precedents binding later practitioners.¹⁸ It is still somewhat mysterious why eighteenth-century artisans should have demanded regulation more insistently than their ancestors had done; but as by this time the guild wardens were often official appointees with limited knowledge of the craft they were to supervise, perhaps the artisans believed that their interests were better served by government regulation.¹⁹ Once again the *nizams* do not necessarily contain all the rules that a craftsman in the relevant guild was to abide by, the emphasis being on matters that in the past had given rise to disputes. But even so, these texts can shed light on goods for sale in the urban marketplace, especially that of Istanbul.

For the end of the period covered here, that is the middle of the nineteenth century, we have the *temettuat* registers that cover large sections of Anatolia and the Balkans in an attempt to record income-producing properties and thus establish a sound basis for future taxation.²⁰ These registers enumerate male property owners one by one. However, as (unlike fields, shops or gardens) items of consumption did not produce any income, they were not of much interest to the registrars.²¹ As a result, these enormously detailed surveys are of but marginal concern for our present purpose.

Ottoman imagery is strongly stylized; yet under certain conditions, it can be most helpful to the historian of material culture. As the source value of early modern European images has been intensively studied, the comments of a specialist like Peter Burke are food for thought to the Ottomanist as well: Burke has pointed out that while many images have been copied from earlier models, or patrons and artists have distorted reality so as to convey a certain message, the result still remains useful. After all, the historian can best visualize the employment and arrangement of ordinary, everyday items in shops or dwellings when he/she studies contemporary pictures.²² In the Ottoman context, Zeynep Tarım Ertuğ has studied sixteenth-century miniatures, showing that, at entertainments in the palace, it was common to decorate the room with flowers in vases, a custom to which written sources refer but rarely.²³ In a different mode, we possess miniatures showing workshops in which scribes and illustrators worked together on a luxury volume. The painter might depict the instruments and materials used, as Burke has observed for European imagery as well; but the Ottoman artist will also tell us something about social hierarchies relevant to manuscript production. Quite often, after all, patrons and authors appear more prominently than the artists; thus the former seem to have had the decisive voice in selecting the topics to be covered – and perhaps even the *mise en page*. But when it comes to using miniatures as sources of information, it is especially the artwork with geographical relevance, such as the images accompanying Matrakçı Nasuh's account of Sultan Süleyman's Iraq campaign that has been mined for information about the layout of Istanbul, and also of a number of Anatolian and Mesopotamian towns.²⁴

While the verbal comments of European travellers have only occasional relevance to Ottoman material culture, the images that they have produced from the fifteenth century onward are often quite valuable. Ever since the later 1800s, it has been known that paintings both of the Italian and Northern Renaissance contain realistic images of Ottoman rugs, and international carpet terminology refers to certain types as 'Lotto' or 'Holbein' because Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480–1556/57) and Hans Holbein the Younger (1497–1543) have so often depicted the items in question. Certainly seventeenth-century Baroque or Neoclassical French painting of the same period was not much inclined toward the 'photographic realism' permitting the detailed description of Ottoman or other artefacts; by contrast, many Dutch artists of the 1600s focused on just this kind of accuracy. It is thus not too surprising that Onno Ydema has located almost a thousand Dutch paintings from this period which depict Indian, Iranian and – for the most part – Ottoman carpets.²⁵

Information on material culture other than carpets comes from the numerous genre paintings that European artists working in Istanbul

produced for patrons back in Latinate Europe. Certainly from the historian's point of view, the value of these images is limited by the fact that the artists knew little about the Ottoman world, had no access to Muslim family dwellings, and, moreover, often could not make even preliminary sketches in front of the scenes they wished to document. Even so, as Nurhan Atasoy has noted, such artists produced good renditions of buildings and landscape features when they could work from a private residence or at an isolated spot.²⁶ For the sixteenth century, we possess the gouaches that certain visitors to Istanbul commissioned, sometimes for inclusion in a volume commemorating their friends (*album amicorum*). In other instances, the artwork might serve as the basis for a costume album; the latter sometimes depicted not only elite personages but also people encountered on the streets of Istanbul.²⁷ As a good deal of research on costume albums is now available, it has become possible even for a non-art historian to contextualize certain images derived from this source.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, European elites for a while enjoyed using and copying Ottoman artwork, especially textiles; in analogy to the taste for *chinoiserie* which was more widespread and lasted longer, this fashion has been described as *turquerie*. Jean Baptiste Vanmour and Jean-Étienne Liotard, both painters, were the protagonists of this venture. They frequently portrayed Europeans in Ottoman dress; and, at least where textiles were concerned, Liotard's work has a certain amount of 'eye-witness' value; for we may assume that his sitters wanted their expensive and exotic clothing depicted in a realistic manner.²⁸

On models, encounters, and mosaics

A starting point for this project has been the present author's infatuation with Roman and especially late Roman archaeology. After all, as any museum-goer will have noted, the Romans have left us a fantastic number of material objects wherever they went; thus for example in a German town like Augsburg, for a short while capital of the not-too-important province of Rhaetia, enough finds have survived to fill an entire museum. Historians of late antiquity have made admirable use of this enormous mass of material, including inscriptions: as examples one might mention the monumental study of Évelyne Patlagean on poverty in the late Roman and early Byzantine worlds, and more recently the catalogue to the broadly based exhibition on the emperor Constantine (272–337) in Trier (Germany) and Luxembourg.²⁹ Remarkably the numerous lively discussions about Roman Britain can become a source of inspiration to the Ottomanist; and the same thing applies to Richard Reece's account of Late Roman archaeology, which manages to be both instructive and very

amusing.³⁰ In addition the reflections of archaeologists of Roman Britain on the acceptance or rejection of Roman deities and customs provide much food for thought; certain arguments may be eye-opening while others, at least to a 'document-fetishist' historian, sound rather less convincing.³¹ In all these studies mundane items like brooches, pilgrims' flasks, and oil lamps have provided the historian access to trade, gender relations, the piety of ordinary provincials and other matters about which the written sources of the time have little to say.³²

But it is only after reading – with a great deal of pleasure – Neil MacGregor's *A History of the World in 100 Objects* that ideas concerning the presentation of Ottoman material culture have begun to crystallize in my mind.³³ Of course MacGregor starts out with some incredible advantages, as he has the holdings of the entire British Museum at his disposal. As a result, he actually can undertake a 'history of the world'; for, after all, many of the major items which we visit in the British Museum's exhibition halls today arrived in London when the British Empire spanned the globe, in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Moreover, given enduring Commonwealth connections, the Museum has been able to continue its acquisitions during the last 65 years as well. It is therefore only a mild exaggeration to say that 'the whole world' is mirrored in the collections of the British Museum.

If truth be told, another of MacGregor's advantages when writing about the world's material culture has left me with a particular feeling of envy; for when an author writes about the entire world, no critic can reasonably fault him/her for leaving things out. On the other hand when the Ottomans are the topic, there will always be people who will say, certainly with some justification, that, for instance, Istanbul has been highlighted while the provinces have been given short shrift. Or else the critic will remark that the Muslim population has taken centre stage, and Christians and Jews pushed into the background. Of course it is a major fault to equate the Ottoman world with the territory of the Republic of Turkey, whose population has become more homogenous as a result of the wars, killings, expulsions, and migrations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, in spite of these limitations, I believe that a discussion of – admittedly elite – Ottoman material culture has a great deal to offer.

It is against this often contested background that I plan to discuss the 41 objects forming the focus of the present undertaking.³⁴ One of the challenges is due to the fact that no repository comparable to the British Museum exists for the Ottoman world, as the sultans and their servitors showed but limited interest in the artefacts of their outlying provinces.³⁵ Certainly, there are exceptions, as for instance the eagerness of Sultan

Selim I (r. 1512–20) to bring back artefacts and artists from the much admired Timurid-Ak Koyunlu civilization in western Iran, a region which this sultan had conquered but failed to retain. Referring to a slightly later period, we might cite the command of Sultan Murad III to bring masters distinguished by their skill in carpet manufacture from the Ottoman province of Egypt to Istanbul, where they were to introduce new ideas and techniques to the palace workshops.³⁶ Booty from western Iran, which once again had been in Ottoman hands for a very few years, apparently was on view – and admired – around 1600 and 50 years later as well. But we do not observe the systematic collecting of provincial artefacts by the monarch that formed part of the art of government in the Qing Empire (1644–1912).³⁷

Booty consisting of European artefacts and – at least temporarily – preserved in Ottoman repositories was less common, but existed nonetheless. Thus Sultan Süleyman's grand vizier İbrahim Paşa (d. 1536) brought back a statue from Buda which for some time decorated the courtyard of his palace; and the sultans' library contained a number of volumes from the holdings of King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary (r. 1458–90), until Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909) decided to return them.

But while the sultans accumulated manuscripts and prints in the Topkapı Palace Library, building an imperial museum was a project that only gathered speed during the last few decades of the empire's existence.³⁸ This new development was due to the initiative of Osman Hamdi Bey (1842–1910), who after participating in numerous excavations all over the sultans' still extensive domains, brought back Syrian sarcophagi and other items for exhibition in the newly revamped imperial museum (Müze-i Hümayun) of which he had become the director.³⁹ With very few exceptions, ethnographic collections came into being in the Republican period, when much of the material culture of previous centuries had been lost; and in many cases, these collections resulted from political decisions, like the closure of all dervish lodges in 1925. As a result, collections aiming at broad coverage of a single region are exceptional indeed; and as a result, a study of the Ottoman material world cannot focus on a single museum, but has to collect items from a multiplicity of sources the world over.

Putting this book together therefore resembles the work of a curator planning an exhibition. On the one hand, the items juxtaposed should tell a story; but on the other, the principal question is whether the owners will permit a given item to be shown at the venue envisaged by the exhibition organizers. When it comes to obtaining permissions for the reproduction of images, any author will have to go to the sources most accessible to

him/her; and in my case, these are located in Istanbul and to a lesser extent in southern Germany and Austria. For the reasons outlined above, much more information is available on certain objects than on others, an issue very familiar to the authors and editors of exhibition catalogues.⁴⁰

On a different level, writing this book resembles mosaic production, where stones of different colours serve to create a more or less encompassing picture. After all, by definition a mosaic consists of different materials like stone, faience or glass; and the artist aims at creating a unified image out of these disparate elements. Similarly, this book is an attempt to provide a broadly based overview of the material culture of the Ottoman elites before about 1840; and hopefully the disparate nature of the artefacts chosen will not prevent the reader from seeing the forest, rather than just the individual trees.

A glance at the historiography: booty, tribute and gifts

A study of Ottoman artefacts, precariously balanced between history and art history, has manifold implications; and I must admit that my proceeding is less than systematic. As the title of this book implies, we will discuss the social and cultural history of the Ottoman elites, centred in Istanbul, through a set of chapters on material objects, for the most part owned by members of this same elite. Similarly to the manner in which art historians and archaeologists normally proceed, I have tried to provide context by referring to the place in which a given object was manufactured, and how and when it was moved, ultimately ending up in the collection where it is now on view.

In addition, material objects may at times have been manufactured according to models arriving in Istanbul from abroad; taken together, imported Chinese porcelain cups and plates as well as the İznik or Kütahya faience inspired by them may be viewed as documents of intercultural connections over great distances. On a more abstract level, this book is also a modest introduction to the study of Ottoman elite consumption; but central to the discussion is a fascinating set of concrete artefacts, which occupy centre stage as they would in a seventeenth-century Dutch still life. Certainly, this book does not pretend to revolutionize Ottoman historiography; but it does set out to present the Ottoman elite as purchasers, gift-givers and recipients of presents, in other words as owners of often valuable material goods. The social relations made possible by these acquisitions – or the giving away of luxurious objects – contributed to the social cohesion of the sultans' servitors over a far-flung territory.

As material culture encompasses so many different types of objects, from inscriptions to ladies' dresses and from bread or rice to gravestones, it

makes no sense to even attempt covering the historiography of individual items, an attempt which would result in a confused medley of 'almost everything'. By contrast, it is helpful to survey the ways and means by which goods used and preserved by the Ottoman elites came into their possession. Starting from the work of Igor Kopytoff and Patrick Geary, four headings come to mind: booty, tribute, gifts and trade.⁴¹ Another aspect of the problem is the way in which goods once owned by the Ottoman elites moved out of their possession: through confiscation by the sultan, sale, dispersal among heirs who had lost their elite status, and plunder. But that is another story.

Booty was a legitimate way of acquisition and brought sultans a great deal of prestige. In the early 1600s, quite a few people believed that a sultan only had the right to build a great mosque with its dependencies after he had acquired the booty necessary for financing the project; for he was not supposed to use the subjects' taxes for this purpose. Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) thus came in for some criticism because he undertook his great mosque complex without any previous victories or booty. People close to the young monarch and the biographer of his architect Mimar Mehmed Ağa thus considered it necessary to defend the enterprise, either by describing the mosque as an image of paradise and an assertion of superiority over the 'heretic' Shi'ites, or else by ascribing the project to the sultan's generosity, a praiseworthy quality no matter the circumstances under which he exercised it.⁴²

A sultan could gain booty in wars against non-Muslims, but also in those waged against Iranian Shi'ites. Selim I (r. 1512–20) brought back artisans from Tabriz as living booty; and the writer and traveller Evliya Çelebi (1611–after 1683) waxed lyrical about the painted decoration of a pavilion, originally from the royal palace in this city and supposedly part of the booty captured by Özdemiş-oğlu Osman Paşa's men in the late 1500s.⁴³ Given the great prestige of items in the Iranian style and especially in the latter's Timurid variety, this kind of artwork seems to have attracted Istanbul art aficionados even decades after its arrival. Regrettably, the collections in the Ottoman capital do not seem to have many pieces clearly marked as booty, although the Safavid-style helmets today in the Topkapı Palace and Military Museums (Askeri Müze), both in Istanbul, may well have come from some battlefield or other. These items sometimes bore dates and featured elaborate gilding and in one case even an animal fight; they thus must have belonged to highly placed warriors.⁴⁴

An Ottoman commander also might gain booty if he subdued a prince owing allegiance to the sultan, but who had rebelled or was considered to have rebelled. Events of this kind were common enough during wars involving the princes of Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania, but also

occurred on the eastern border. While Evliya may have exaggerated the riches of the khan of Bitlis and especially of his library, doubtless the booty gained after the defeat of this prince was substantial.⁴⁵ The 'where', 'how' and 'by whom' of Ottoman booty-taking surely will repay further study.

Prisoners were perhaps the most valuable form of human booty; and the negotiated ransoms that allowed some of these people to ultimately return home are a variety of booty as well. Most of the time, ransoms were payable in money; but on the Ottoman–Habsburg border in Hungary, some military men serving the emperor and holding prisoners of a certain rank wanted at least part of the ransom in the shape of textiles, presumably silks or brocades. Once again, we do not know whether some of the Ottoman textiles today in Budapest museums originally had arrived as part of a ransom payment.⁴⁶

Other luxury goods came to Istanbul as diplomatic gifts, from European countries including Venice, the Habsburg Empire or France and, perhaps most importantly from the Ottoman viewpoint, from the courts of Iran. The Ottoman Palace holds a few items that originated with the Ak Koyunlus, a dynasty whose members governed most of Iran during the 1400s. Admittedly, it is often impossible to say that a given item was a diplomatic gift rather than booty from the war which Mehmed the Conqueror waged against Uzun Hasan (Battle of Otluk Beli/Başkent, 1473). Later on, numerous gifts came from Safavid Iran, including lavishly illustrated manuscripts that Shah Tahmāsp (r. 1524–76) likely no longer wanted after this monarch had given up painting on account of his religious preoccupations.⁴⁷ Silk fabrics and carpets were also esteemed diplomatic gifts; but we do not know what members of the Ottoman elite thought of the 'storied' textiles fashionable in Iran during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and which featured depictions of the encounter between Khusraw and Shirīn or between Madjnūn and Laylā. While such depictions of people and their stories were quite alien to the Ottoman tradition of textile design, the silks at issue must have found some admirers in the palace, or else they would have been discarded long ago.⁴⁸

Not all the goods that the embassies of the Shah brought to Istanbul have survived. Items containing gold and silver quite often went to the mint during the many crises of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, while manuscripts sometimes got sold or stolen, winding up in European or American collections. But even so, a recent exhibition catalogue demonstrates that, even now, the Topkapı Palace contains a significant number of luxury items that were gifts from Safavid princes; and most spectacularly, this museum also contains a lavish Indian throne that Nādir Shah (r. 1736–47) had brought back from his plundering raid into

northern India (1739) and then passed on to the sultan as a present, presumably to document his military potency.⁴⁹

Gifts from Iran were 'worth keeping' because so often they set aesthetic standards that Ottoman sultans and their elites hoped to emulate. As for diplomatic gifts from European kingdoms and principalities, they are often well documented, albeit only from the senders' side. Thus we often know the makers of the silver table decorations manufactured in Augsburg or Nuremberg for the Habsburg emperor; the latter needed to know which artisans could deliver silverware of a certain quality in good time, as he intended to send these items to Istanbul with an embassy whose departure might be imminent. But such items were not likely to survive for long: for in the eyes of the Ottoman court, their value lay in the silver that they contained; and we can surmise that many pieces were melted down already in the weeks and months following their arrival in Istanbul. Others, especially those moved by clockwork, may have amused the court for a short while, before they also took the road to the mint. At the same time, at least during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Habsburgs, while paying tribute for the strip of Hungary in their possession, preserved their *amour propre* by renaming these deliveries 'gift to the Turks' (*Türckenverehrung*).⁵⁰ Thus what one side regarded as tribute, the other might consider a freely accorded diplomatic gift. As for the Ottoman view, the payment of tribute meant that the ruler in question acknowledged his inferiority and loyalty; due to his submission, his territories were no longer a legitimate target for conquest. Conversely, the cessation of tribute was equivalent to a declaration of war.

Even when the tribute was delivered in money, it was customary to send gifts along as well.⁵¹ Moreover, ambassadors to the Ottoman court, even if not bringing tribute, brought along gifts as polite gestures, especially on festive occasions; a list of the items that a Venetian *bailo* kept in his house for such purposes has recently been analysed.⁵² In the Ottoman world, it was normal practice for a person lower down the social scale to present gifts when visiting a person of superior social status. No request would have been acceptable without such presents; yet their status was ambiguous. Ottoman authors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries often deplored aspects of gift-giving that they regarded as corruption. Yet, in a system where pay for officials was often symbolic and late in arrival as well, presents received were an essential source of revenue.⁵³ In addition, such donations could display the power and potency of the giver, who was rich enough to afford a precious item, and also of the receiver, whose status was enhanced by the fact that all sorts of people were anxious to secure his goodwill through the gifts that they sent him. Furthermore, gift-giving established a symbolic bond between the giver, who was the

superior, and the receiver who thus admitted his inferiority; this link was especially obvious when a sultan accorded an official or ambassador a robe of honour.⁵⁴

Gifts brought by Ottoman envoys are known when the receiving side kept detailed records that have survived to the present. A recent study has shown that in the 1400s and 1500s, Ottoman diplomatic gifts to European rulers were often quite modest, probably indicating the low esteem in which the sultans held the recipients. Presents became more sumptuous in the eighteenth century, when the sultan's superiority was no longer unchallenged.⁵⁵ In this later period, Ottoman ambassadors to European courts might also write about the gifts that they had taken along, and sometimes even about the reception of the latter in Vienna or elsewhere.⁵⁶ Throughout, our information is especially ample for Russia, where as noted the court bureaucracy diligently wrote down what kinds of goods had been received, for instance from Ottoman merchants sent by the sultan's court to purchase fine furs, or by dignitaries of the Orthodox Church hoping for financial aid from a sovereign of the same faith.⁵⁷

Both the shahs and certain European potentates occasionally offered animals as diplomatic gifts.⁵⁸ Sometimes these were exotic creatures such as lions or elephants; the latter always came from India but sometimes transited through the Safavid court of Iran. As already noted with respect to the Indian throne gifted by Nādir Shah, 'passing on' an item quite obviously acquired by means other than regular purchase was an acceptable proceeding. Exotic animals lived in the sultans' menagerie, already a 'tourist attraction' in the late 1500s; on special occasions they were taken along in festive processions, perhaps to show that the sultan dominated the world, including the realm of wild beasts. European potentates might send hunting dogs; while in the eyes of the Ottoman elite dogs were not otherwise highly esteemed creatures, those serving the sultans' hunt were privileged, especially if the monarch was an avid hunter.⁵⁹

During the last few years, interest in Ottoman diplomacy, dormant for many years, has fortunately revived. But while the number of monographs dealing with individual embassies to and from Poland, Venice, the Netherlands, France, the Habsburg Empire and other countries now increases with some regularity, we do not as yet possess a synthesis covering Ottoman diplomatic relations over a lengthy period of time. Yet it is only such a broadly based work that can appropriately treat the question of gift-giving and receiving, among sovereigns but also among dignitaries of more or less elevated rank. Only in such a broader context will it emerge which presents, at a given point in time, conformed to accepted protocol, and which by contrast were damnable bribes.

A glance at the historiography: buying and selling elite goods

Last but not least, the Ottoman elite could acquire luxurious goods by purchase. Once again, the most desirable goods came from Iran; but sources on the relevant commerce are not very numerous. However, we do know that the merchants from Iran (*acem tüccarı*) on record in Ottoman archival documents did not just import Iranian raw silk, which in part transited through Aleppo or Izmir on its way to England or France, or else supplied Bursa manufacturers.⁶⁰ If trade had been confined to raw silk, we would have expected the *acem tüccarı* to disappear once imports of Iranian silk collapsed in the early 1700s, when an Afghan invasion brought down Safavid rule.⁶¹ However, in the 1700s, we find sporadic references to Iranian textiles in qadi registers, estate inventories and other Ottoman documents: a page in the palace might own bedding covered with Iranian fabric, while other people bought curtains that were either of authentic Iranian origin or else imitations of these goods.⁶² Felts of *acem* workmanship, presumably decorated, also found a market in the Ottoman lands. Presumably not all imported Iranian textiles were great luxuries; they must have come in different qualities, as some *acem tüccarı* did business in outlying places near the mouth of the Danube, where customers were surely not rich. But as Ottoman sources quite often show that Iranian textiles were esteemed by the elite, it makes sense to assume that many if not most pieces of this kind were of good quality and signified wealth and status.

More obviously a luxury import were the illustrated manuscripts 'made in Shiraz' that attracted elite Ottoman buyers during the second half of the sixteenth century, as apparent from the seals of the erstwhile possessors or inserted notes recording ownership. Lâle Uluç has found evidence of book producers with an Ottoman market in mind: thus an illustrated Shiraz manuscript features headgear that seems to be a somewhat misunderstood version of a janissary headdress, and laudatory verses that refer to a 'sultan' rather than to a 'shah'. There is even evidence of a middleman who apparently arranged purchases of Shiraz-produced manuscripts for wealthy Ottomans.⁶³ Unfortunately most of the Safavid archival documentation no longer exists, so that it is impossible to say how the Iranian elite viewed this transfer of manuscripts to the Ottoman lands.

More evidence survives on the purchase of luxury textiles from Venice. While many if not most of the Venetian silks that went into the caftans surviving in the Topkapı Palace had arrived as diplomatic gifts, the existence of workshops in Venice that geared their production to the Istanbul market by copying Ottoman designs shows that there must have been a circle of people interested in such imports. In addition, in the

late 1500s and early 1600s Venice had turned, albeit for a short time, into a major producer of woollen cloth; and Istanbul was one of the markets for this textile.⁶⁴ Certainly such fabrics would not have attracted the wealthiest members of Ottoman society; but the poor could not afford imported woollens either. As long as the Venetian industry survived, it may well have supplied townspeople that were comfortably off though not rich, so that these woollens qualified as 'luxuries for the limited budget'.

By contrast, the porcelain purchases by Ottoman princesses of the 1700s and early 1800s, and those of dignitaries eager to emulate palace fashions, form part of the 'real' luxury trade.⁶⁵ In imitation of the Chinese original, by the 1710s true porcelain was manufactured in Europe as well, with the earliest producers located in Saxony. Comparable manufactures soon appeared in Vienna and in Sèvres near Paris; they were all patronized by Ottoman elite customers, to such an extent that coffee cups conforming to Ottoman taste became a mainstay of the Dresden/Meissen manufacture. For reasons that remain unclear, in the course of the 1700s Ottoman princesses seem to have lost interest in Chinese porcelain.

A glance at the historiography: a growing interest in valuables

Ever since the 1980s, interest in luxury and semi-luxury objects and their possessors has been on the increase; when considering the context, we need to dwell on both historical and historiographical factors. Where the former are at issue, we all know that we live in a world of massive poverty and income inequality. But at the same time, not only in the wealthy countries of the West, but also in polities like India, South Korea and Turkey, a sizeable section of the urban population has gained access to goods like cars, televisions, cell phones and computers, which even when available on the market, would have seemed unattainable luxuries some 30 years ago. Given the diffusion of such former luxuries about to turn into necessities, it makes sense for historians to engage with the possessors of valuable goods who have lived in past times. Through the work of Jan de Vries, we have learned that such goods might become more accessible in the 1600s, even while real wages were falling; for the 'industrious revolution' of the 1600s and 1700s involved people working longer hours to produce goods for the market, while at the same time purchasing items their ancestors either had not used, or else made at home.⁶⁶ Especially in Britain, but to some extent on the Continent as well, people acquired more extensive wardrobes and made records of the textiles and ornaments they purchased and the ways in which they used and reused them.⁶⁷ By the year 1800, even in Austria, not exactly at the forefront of

industrialization, the libretto of a Haydn oratorio featured a nobleman who tempted a peasant girl by promising her a gold watch.⁶⁸

More recently, scholars have come to realize that in the 1600s and 1700s, a concern with material goods and their consumption was not a uniquely European affair. Especially in China and Japan, we observe parallel phenomena; and here too, people of moderate income might become interested in luxury or semi-luxury goods available in the market.⁶⁹ At least in the Japanese instance, manufacturers and merchants of this period made significant efforts to advertise their products, for instance by stressing on their shop signs that the household of a famous nobleman was one of their customers.⁷⁰ A historian of China has focused on the pieces of red coral that the Qing court purchased from European merchants, which were then integrated into courtly ornaments or gifted to valued retainers and thus diffused among the elite.⁷¹ Certainly the understanding that consumption was important in early modern East Asia is still limited to specialists; but the present prominence of China in world trade makes it likely that given time, information on earlier consumption will 'trickle down' into non-specialist circles as well.

In this context, Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello have attempted to systematize 'spaces of global interaction' in a table, focusing on the type of space involved, the processes shaping the object, the kinds of objects at issue, and the key variables concerned in the contemporary evaluation of this material.⁷² Among the processes shaping a given object, trade and customization are closely connected; in some cases, the customization of a given item may immediately follow the process of manufacture, because the Chinese or Indian producer has been informed of the demands of a prospective customer. But it may also take place well after sale because a buyer in Britain, France – or the Ottoman Empire – may want a Chinese ewer mounted in precious metal, or the transformation of a Chinese flask into an Ottoman-style rosewater sprinkler (see Chapter 8).

All manner of negotiations preceded customization if the latter took place at the point of manufacture; but in some cases the buyers and producers went further and the outcome was downright hybridization. Gerritsen and Riello here think of Sino-European hybrids; but Sino-Ottoman hybrids also existed, for instance, in Chinese porcelain decorated with Arabic inscriptions and presumably meant for the Ottoman market. Import substitution, another category highlighted by the two authors, is familiar enough to the Ottoman historian as well: after all, certain Chinese designs including clusters of grapes visibly inspired the potters of İznik, who produced many variants of this design.⁷³ At the same time, objects might also help the viewer to visualize distant places. In the European context there are numerous literary texts documenting this aim; but in the

absence of relevant Ottoman sources, it is anybody's guess whether imagining distant places also was important to a purchaser in Istanbul or Bursa.

For most specialists, however, early modern Europe is still the principal field of study; and by now research projects concerned with domestic interiors and luxury have generated so many books and articles that we can only present a very few samples.⁷⁴ Connections between the trade in valuables and artistic creation or scientific advances are a special favourite of researchers. At the same time historians with these types of interest will often focus on very particular goods, often rarities like a feather mantle made by Native Americans and donned by a young noblewoman living in Holland, a garment then depicted in a painting of more or less artistic character.⁷⁵

Certain rarities were highly perishable; and in fact their fragility was part of their charm. In this context, Marina Bianchi has emphasized the value placed on flower paintings that from the late 1500s onward could make ephemeral blooms durable. She has particularly discussed the place of tulips in still lifes, also highlighting the attraction of novelty among aficionados searching for ever different varieties of this flower. In her perspective, the 'bubble' of tulip bulbs in the 1630s, an avowedly commercial phenomenon, is best explained by the value of novelty in trading circles.

Anne Goldgar has studied the writings of flower enthusiasts active in the 1600s, who debated whether an artist could produce a masterpiece rivalling a flower in nature. When describing flora, these authors also derived inspiration from luxuries like silks or semi-precious stones, which of course were trade goods. Among flowers, tulips retained their popularity even after the speculative craze of the 1630s had ended in collapse. Furthermore, tulip-fanciers in western Europe regarded their activities as growers of ever different varieties as an occasion for elite sociability. It is a pity that nobody has yet attempted to view the concern of Ottoman elite men with tulip-growing (see Chapter 8) together with the activities of their early modern counterparts in western Europe on the one hand, and contemporary Chinese chrysanthemum fanciers on the other.⁷⁶ As the work of Seyit Ali Kahraman has now made the names of many Istanbul flower-enthusiasts readily available, it would be of interest to study the social relations established by these men; did perhaps a shared enthusiasm for flowers form a bond between a modest barber and the son of a *paşa*?⁷⁷

In a different mode, Pamela Smith has dwelt on the linkage between work on minerals – and perhaps the relevant trade – and alchemy. Certain alchemists associated lizards with their presumed art of turning base metal into gold; while no gold ever materialized, and the costs of the enterprise

were largely borne by the lizards, the production of mercury-based cinnabar (or vermillion), a dyestuff producing a vibrant red, was in fact connected to alchemy.⁷⁸ The thirteenth-century scholar Albertus Magnus expounded this presumed connection, also present in certain Chinese writings. Now, as Smith points out, it is hard to imagine that this linkage could have been invented independently in the east and west of the Eurasian landmass, particularly at a time when the Mongol conquests had facilitated communications. Smith has therefore suggested that the producers of cinnabar, who handled mercury and must have often been poisoned by their work, also carried the folklore of their trade along with them; and many unknown intermediaries must have intervened before these beliefs arrived in the study of Albertus Magnus. We still do not know enough about the Ottoman dye-producers' craft to determine whether they were part of a similar trans-Eurasian network; alchemists, however, were by no means unknown in the Ottoman Empire of the later 1700s.

Studies of individual goods and techniques, possibly including their travels across the sultans' territories and beyond, are as yet quite rare, in part because there are few historians of Ottoman scientific thought and their communication with other Ottomanists is still very limited. By placing valuable objects at centre stage, the present book hopes to stimulate interest especially on connections to Iran, India, and China, which should release historians both from an exclusively Ottoman-centric viewpoint and from the fixation on comparisons with Latinate Europe.

Stories large and small reflected in pieces of craftwork

Any discussion of Ottoman and imported artefacts needs to refer, time and again, to the empire's history. However, I plan to keep away from the 'rise and decline' paradigm, as I do not think that it is very helpful; and when it comes to the history of material life and consumption, it is totally useless. After all, even a casual look at – for instance – Bursa estate inventories will show that people of the late fifteenth century did not live more comfortably than their descendants of the 1700s. In fact, if the volume of goods left behind by deceased men and women is at all indicative, the opposite must have been true. Cushions, curtains, silk dresses: all were apparently in more ample supply in the later period, when the Ottoman Palace's demands did not completely dominate Bursa textile production. Even for the century that separates the mid 1500s from the mid 1600s, a recent study of over 350 estate inventories from this city shows not only fashion changes, but also a notable increase in the textiles owned by those people wealthy enough to have their estates inventoried by the qadi's

court.⁷⁹ Yet in terms of political history, the Ottoman Empire was at the height of its power in the mid 1500s and – at least temporarily – in deep trouble by the middle of the seventeenth century. To sum it all up: before the 1800s, the profits of empire often did not translate into greater well-being for the people living at the imperial centre, in Istanbul or Bursa, especially if they were not part of the upper levels of the governing elite.

Thus I do not plan to use the objects presented here as an excuse to recount yet another ‘short history of the Ottoman Empire’.⁸⁰ There are several reasons for this avoidance: firstly material objects can help us to tell great stories, but usually these stories encompass relatively short periods: a few decades rather than centuries. Perhaps if architecture had been included, it might have been feasible to discuss Ottoman history in connection with Hagia Sophia/Aya Sofya, a building which preceded the empire by centuries and continues to exist to the present day, almost a century after the sultans’ rule has ended. But historians of art and architecture have studied this topic at length; and an outsider should not amateurishly summarize the superb work that they have done.⁸¹ Moreover, in recent years, many general discussions of Ottoman history have appeared, and there is no point in replicating them.⁸²

Therefore the overall narrative focuses on material goods and consumption by the elite of a great empire, in which a – by the standards of the time – relatively powerful central administration tried to collect most of the resources which the subjects did not require for immediate survival and use them for political purposes, in other words primarily for war. This diagnosis is valid for many kingdoms and empires the world over; for a telling example from early modern Latinate Europe, we may refer to Louis XIV of France (r. 1643–1715), who during his long reign exhausted his subjects by unending wars.⁸³ However, in spite of the impact of taxation and war, both in the Ottoman world and in France, there were spaces in which central control was less stringent; and in the ‘interstices’ of the system some non-elite personages managed to prosper and engage in a certain amount of luxury consumption.⁸⁴

In comparison with other great empires, especially that of the Mughals in India, the Ottomans suffered from the disadvantage that so many of their territories were mountainous, steppe or desert; in other words they produced a limited supply of taxes. Populations and revenues were thus never comparable to those available to Emperors Akbar (r. 1556–1605) and Shah Jahān (r. 1628–58), while the proximity of the Habsburg and Russian Empires, both heavily armed, made constant campaigns all but unavoidable. Admittedly in the 1500s and 1600s, Ottoman warfare was offensive; but especially by the later 1700s, it had come to be largely defensive in character.

Wartime financing had serious consequences for the production and consumption possible to Ottoman subjects. As Mehmet Genç and Murat Çizakça have shown, the sultans' government was not much concerned with investment and capital formation on the part of its subjects: in wartime, manufacturers had to deliver arms, horse-gear and other military needs at prices often considerably below market value.⁸⁵ Furthermore, even in peacetime, artisans had to sell their products at prices allowing them profits of only 10 to 20 per cent; as, on the other hand, credit was available at roughly the same rates, there was little gain to be expected from investments. This situation was the 'underside' of the Ottoman administration's concern with 'market welfare', in other words the short-term interests of the consuming public, elite and non-elite alike.⁸⁶ As for agriculturalists in the areas surrounding the Black Sea, they also had to provide grain at prices that made it unattractive to plough up new ground or raise productivity on the existing fields.

When war caused bottlenecks in supplies, as it did particularly during the second half of the eighteenth century, the result was a generalized economic depression. The latter even nullified one of the long-standing advantages of Ottoman armies and navies, namely the superior quality of military logistics, which for a long time had ensured that Ottoman soldiers and sailors were somewhat better fed than their counterparts serving Russia.

However, as noted, quite a few Ottoman subjects made use of the 'interstices' of the Ottoman command economy to manufacture items of good quality and make a reasonable profit at the same time. First of all, more opportunities for enrichment were available in provinces somewhat remote from the centre, as apparent from studies of Cairo during the 1600s and early 1700s.⁸⁷ Here artisans even established family firms that continued over several generations: this type of stability was relatively rare in Istanbul. It was only in the later 1700s, when the Mamlūk *beys* fought each other and then attempted to secede from the empire that revenue demands became so high and unpredictable that most artisans found it hard to survive. Similarly, the producers of Syrian cotton cloth reminiscent of Indian textiles, while badly hit by the crisis of the 1760s, recovered enough that a producer in Urfa (today Şanlıurfa in eastern Turkey) around 1800 still regarded the future with a degree of optimism.⁸⁸

Within this framework, sometimes we can at least partially access the 'life stories' of individual manufactured products. Thus a set of incompletely preserved tiles with İznik-style floral designs in present-day Hungary reflects the fascination which this colourful faience exerted upon wealthy people, including non-Muslim magnates on the empire's borders. Such personages might have tiles made to order and installed by an artisan

expressly brought in from the Ottoman centre.⁸⁹ By contrast, the numerous tobacco pipes excavated in abandoned Ottoman fortresses in the Ukraine pose a different kind of problem: did the soldiers buy their smoker's equipment locally, or did at least some of these pipes come from Istanbul? Admittedly, questions of this kind come to mind easily; but they are difficult to answer; and in consequence, our 'life stories' remain quite fragmentary.

Other tales of people and things emerge from the inscriptions put up by donors establishing pious foundations, especially in the eighteenth century. For in this period it had become fashionable to decorate buildings with fairly long and often versified texts in Ottoman Turkish, which allowed the donors to express their intentions and ambitions more elaborately than had been possible previously, when concise texts in Arabic were the rule.⁹⁰ After all, it was in the 1700s and afterward that sultanic foundations became less imposing, while the probably broadening elite used their – more limited – resources to endow numerous libraries and fountains; and wealthy Christians quite often made donations to churches. Moreover, the readers of these inscriptions may well have noted the connections between some of the people whose names had been thus immortalized: as Edhem Eldem has shown, a modest gravestone might emphasize the more or less tenuous links of the deceased's family with an elite figure.⁹¹ The decor chosen for an Armenian church might reflect links between Istanbul and, for example, the small Anatolian town of Develi (see Chapter 4): in this case, as in others, somebody must have travelled for miles to transfer ornaments and designs devised in distant places.

Legitimizing the study of consumption, defending the present enterprise

Quite simply, the Ottoman material culture forming the subject matter of this book encompasses all the items with which the wealthy among the sultans' subjects chose to surround themselves. Or to put it differently, this book will deal with the goods and plants that such people received as gifts, bought or cultivated.

Apart from a few decorative elements of small size, we will exclude buildings. Instead we will focus on items in daily use. In a way, they correspond to the pieces that an archaeologist might extract from an excavation site, situated perhaps in the dry climate of Egypt: ceramic plates and platters, textiles, arms, miniatures on paper and even a stove. For some types of objects and activities, records from Latinate Europe provide the most convenient documentation, so that a few such records will enter our purview as well. As most surviving objects once belonged to elite figures, silk dresses, elaborate cushion covers, and carpets occupy

centre stage. While subjects of the Ottoman sultans have produced most of the objects to be discussed, imports also occur, as the latter were often part of the accumulation of objects found in a well-to-do dwelling of the eighteenth century, an upmarket shop in Istanbul's covered market, or Cairo's Khān al-Khalīlī.

The present book will explore Ottoman consumption, an issue that is currently a favourite topic in conferences but on which the published literature is still quite limited.⁹² Here a major unresolved question concerns the eighteenth century: for scholars like Shirine Hamadeh, this period saw increasing numbers of people leaving their houses in summertime to enjoy the pleasures that Istanbul had to offer, for instance in its picnic places near the Bosphorus and Golden Horn.⁹³ Certainly a picnic did not necessarily cost much money, especially if, as often happened in Bursa, there were guild-connected pious foundations sponsoring the outings of local craftsmen. But on the other hand, a minimal level of well-being is often a precondition for people to develop an interest in the joyful aspects of life. That said, studies – for instance of Damascus – have shown that many artisans lived in great poverty; and presumably the situation was not too different in Istanbul or Bursa.⁹⁴ Most recently, M. Şükrü Hanioglu has concluded that during the second half of the eighteenth century, the material culture even of fairly elite persons changed very little, and it was only in the late 1800s that we see drastic changes, at least in the urban milieu.⁹⁵

Our present discussion will not solve this problem: to do so, historians will need to examine a variety of towns where eighteenth-century estate inventories are fairly numerous, such as for instance Bursa, and compare the level of material culture reflected in them with inventories from the 1800s; fortunately for us, Ottoman courts continued to produce them to the very end of the nineteenth century.⁹⁶

However, another research problem, namely the manner in which consumption served as a marker of sociopolitical status, is more amenable to the qualitative approach we will attempt in the present study. Here an article by Leslie Peirce has prepared the path that we will follow, namely her comparison of the estate left by a poor woman and the trousseau of a rich one, both residents of sixteenth-century Aintab, today's Gaziantep. Evidently the clothes and jewellery of a rich woman indicated the wealth and status of her family, even though the only outsiders to ever see these prestige items were other females. In this context the much discussed fulminations of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century sultans against changing female fashions are also of interest.⁹⁷ In other words: what women saw and reported concerning other women had an impact on the standing of a given family.

The present study thus does not claim to suggest a new paradigm for Ottoman history: it seems unlikely that a consumption- and material-driven study will invalidate what we know – or think we know – about the political history of the sultans' territories. However, this enterprise will hopefully contribute toward redressing the balance: Ottoman subjects will appear less like the *homo oeconomicus* or *homo militaris* developed by previous generations of sociologists but will appear as people with a variety of concerns: eating, praying, drinking coffee, producing faience, weaving and embroidering, and sometimes simply enjoying life. Focusing on consumption has the added advantage that we can include gender in an overall account instead of 'cording off' this issue in a separate section of Ottoman history, of no interest except to specialists.⁹⁸

Cooperation between disciplines

In addition this work hopes to facilitate linkages between Ottomanist historians and museologists: for we as historians have a lot to learn. After all, museum specialists study the objects in their care with a view to preserving them, and thus pay much attention to the relevant technologies. Changes in technology on the other hand, as even a superficial reading of the historiography of Roman artefacts will show, indicate economic changes including long-distance trade, which do not show up well in the works of late antique authors.⁹⁹ In the Ottoman world as well, the broken platters, jars, and coffee cups 'made in İznik' or 'made in Kütahya' indicate the arrival of pack animals or boats from these centres in distant provinces, a commerce about which written records have little to say.

Museologists obviously work closely with archaeologists, whose discipline continues to be an underdeveloped section of Ottomanist studies. Yet the examination of diverse pottery shards can much advance our understanding of the living conditions especially of the poorer inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire. In a different vein, only a study of animal bones from the last five centuries will inform us of the average sizes of Anatolian or Balkan sheep and the amounts of meat, milk and wool that they may have provided.¹⁰⁰ The garbage that over the centuries has accumulated to form the Anatolian hillocks known as *höyük*s should also repay study, not only for prehistory but also for more recent periods; pre-historical and Roman-period garbage dumps have been exciting archaeologists and historians for many generations already. To mention just one possibility: when did industrially produced glass containers and tin cans first show up in Anatolian villages, in the long run replacing locally manufactured pottery?¹⁰¹ These are just some of the questions that the

historian may pose to the archaeologist, or that historically minded archaeologists will ask on their own initiative.

However, some of the issues brought up by the latter will unfortunately play only a marginal role in the present study. Thus in the wake of Rifa'at Abou-El-Haj's historical work, Uzi Baram and Lynda Carroll have focused in their landmark introduction to a collection of studies on Ottoman archaeology on the deleterious impact of a variety of nationalisms in impeding the study, and especially the archaeological investigation, of Ottoman remains.¹⁰² Nationalism and the paradigm of 'Ottoman decline' have often been closely linked; these concerns are of the greatest importance and I could not agree more with their spirited critique. But the present study concentrates on items that have survived in treasuries and later in museums, and in consequence, archaeological issues will form the backdrop rather than the central concern of this book. Yet whenever my limited knowledge permits, I have tried to learn from studies of Chinese porcelain submerged in the Red Sea or broken tobacco pipes in a fortress in today's Ukraine. In this manner, we will approach the movements of goods, often over long distances and sometimes between continents, which became accessible to well-to-do Ottoman subjects by means of trade, gift-giving and war.

At the end of the day, the few practitioners of Ottoman archaeology active today will want to develop their own problematic, and 'come out from under' the domination of history. But once again, as Roman archaeologists have shown, in the long run it is an asset, and not a liability, to have written sources available. In the long run, both sides have much to gain and little to lose from mutual cooperation.

A road map

Justifying a scholarly enterprise is one thing, but 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating'. We will start out from the obvious fact that Anatolia and the Balkans were not a *tabula rasa* when the Ottoman sultans and their comrades-in-arms appeared on the scene. Admittedly the population in certain areas was sparse, especially after the plague epidemics of the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries; it is a sobering thought that we do not even know which parts of Anatolia were most seriously affected.¹⁰³

Items of material culture produced by the pre-Ottoman inhabitants of Anatolia and the Balkans were often left lying around and reused in Ottoman times, sometimes for purposes completely different from those that the original item had served. Thus in the early 1970s, the mayor of the town of Ladik (Sarayönü, Konya) showed me an antique capital that had been hollowed out and for a while had served as a mortar in which seeds

had been crushed with a pestle to produce vegetable oil; the hole from which the oil had escaped remained visible. Discarded by the time of my visit, the stone was still lying by the wayside. In a similar vein, the first object to be discussed here is the gravestone of a Roman legionary, presumably abandoned for some time and reused as a door jamb of the İbadullah mosque in Ankara, built in the seventeenth or eighteenth century.

As a symbol of the Islamization of Anatolia and the resulting veneration of the sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina, we will dwell upon a small seventeenth-century faience depicting the Kaaba; this image will thus also stand for the impact of the Arab world on the inhabitants of the Ottoman central provinces. On the other hand, material goods showing a link to India are not easy to locate. Yet the connection with the Mughal world should not be neglected; and we will discuss an Ottoman miniature showing an Indian elephant at the gates of Belgrade. Surely in real life such a creature was seen but rarely in the Balkans. By contrast Chinese artefacts were quite frequent. Yet very few subjects of the sultans can have visited China and found out for themselves that the Chinese emperor had, for centuries already, claimed that his throne was the middle of the known world. The sultans' propagandists also claimed that Istanbul was the world's centre; but due to the lack of direct communication between the two elites, they did not need to engage with their Chinese counterparts concerning this thorny question.¹⁰⁴ At the end of the chapter, there will be a brief reference to exchanges with central Europe, in the shape of a pair of pistols that apparently travelled from that region to Istanbul and back again. It is not by chance that the Ottoman-European exchange has received but short shrift; for the present study aims to show that in the years before 1840, other contacts were of equal or even greater importance.

The following two chapters highlight the sultans' court and the major divisions within Ottoman society. Most of the images discussed in Chapter 2 show sultans; for in the world of the palace elite, portraying the monarch and through him the continuity of the dynasty was a major legitimizing concern.¹⁰⁵ Two images, however, have different subjects: the chapter begins with a discussion of the drawings used by the helmet-maker and silversmiths who produced the famous helmet-cum-tiara through which Sultan Süleyman and his then grand vizier İbrahim Paşa (d. 1536) asserted that the Ottoman sultan was superior to all sovereigns in Latinate Europe, and particularly to the Pope. As for the second item, it is an Indian miniature showing an Ottoman ambassador to the Mughal court. Obviously this personage represented the sultan; and the embassy surely was a move in the competition for status between the Ottoman and

Mughal dynasties.¹⁰⁶ For our purposes, the painting also stands for the 'Indian connection'.

In Chapter 3, the divisions within Ottoman society form the principal topic. As a backdrop, we have to envisage the contrast between the sultans' servitors (*askeri*) and the tax-paying population (*reaya*). But although this distinction is of great significance, it will not be our main concern; for so many items shown in the remainder of this book belong to the world of the elite, in which the sultans' high-ranking *askeris* occupy a privileged position. Therefore, to allow people from the subject population, but also lower-ranking *askeris*, including janissaries, even a modest share of the available space, this chapter deals with the *reaya* and low-level military men, focusing on the divisions between males and females, townsfolk and villagers, as well as free people and slaves. Where the gender divide is concerned, we owe a great debt to Abdülcelil Levni (d. 1732) who has provided us with images of handsome young men and beautiful women. In the Ottoman milieu, these depictions were a novel departure. Had we been limited to the artwork of the 1500s and 1600s, there would have been but very few depictions of individuals available, apart from Ottoman monarchs; and the female half of the population would have remained almost completely in the shadows.

As for the world of the townspeople, it is represented by a weight and a steelyard, as traders and many artisans could not have done business without frequent weighing. Ottoman written sources, but also the travelogues penned by visitors, have often mentioned the rather drastic punishments suffered by artisans and shopkeepers who had, really or supposedly, cheated their customers by selling underweight bread or lengths of cloth shorter than the local standard.¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, peasants seem to have been almost absent from Ottoman artwork; and they were not often depicted by European visitors either. While pre-campaign parades might highlight the importance of peasant labour for the successful conduct of a military enterprise, patrons sponsoring images apparently did not often regard it as appropriate to immortalize local farms and agriculturalists, although the labour of the latter formed the basis of all human life.¹⁰⁸ As one of the few exceptions proving the rule, we will introduce the 'classicist' image of villagers at work, produced by an artist-cum-archaeologist from northern Europe in the early 1800s.

Last but not least, there is the opposition between free people and slaves. We will assume that the subjects depicted on Ottoman miniatures were typically freemen, unless they were 'elite slaves' (*kul*) belonging to the sultan. If, in reality, some of the people depicted had been enslaved, the viewer might be unaware of the fact, as they would have dressed like other poor people. However, a faience plate made in the 1600s does show a

janissary together with his shackled captive, although the inscription does not indicate why the patron wanted this scene immortalized. If not ransomed, this captive might well have turned into a slave.

As for Chapters 4 and 5, they deal with two activities central to any early modern polity, namely religion and warfare. Islamic practice has been made visible through a pious inscription bearing the names of God, the Prophet Muhammad and the first four caliphs. Dating to the early 1700s, it serves as an assertion of Sunni right belief, against the Shi'ite claim that Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān had usurped the caliphate that was the birthright of the Prophet's relative and son-in-law 'Alī. The second item standing for the Muslim religion is a prayer rug that the owner would have oriented in the direction of Mecca; together with the faience depiction of the Kaaba (Chapter 1), three items thus represent the practice of Sunni Islam. A single silver plate that once belonged to the bishop's church of Bursa will stand for the Orthodox, while a niche cover from the early nineteenth century destined for an Armenian church represents this important part of the non-Muslim population. A seventeenth-century etching picturing a Jewish woman reminds us of the fact that, especially in Istanbul, but also in Salonika and Palestine, there lived a sizeable Jewish community, quite a few of its members descended from the Sephardic Jews exiled from Spain in 1492.

The arms, offensive and defensive, which are the topic of Chapter 5, for the most part were show- and collection-pieces; put differently, they rarely if ever had served on the battlefield, no matter if their proud owners claimed otherwise. Collecting arms was a pastime of Ottoman sultans and perhaps of high dignitaries as well; as the possessions of the latter so often ended up in the sultans' palace, we cannot say much about the collections of viziers or provincial governors. But if it is true that the gilt helmet in the collection of Archduke Ferdinand II (1529–95) had belonged to Sokollu Mehmed, murdered in 1579, the grand vizier possibly possessed an armoury that was sold off after his death. Another display object, frequently appearing in exhibition catalogues, is a water-flask of highly decorated leather, probably sent as a gift to the Habsburg ruler Rudolf II (r. 1576–1612) by Murad III (r. 1574–95), when the sultan invited the emperor to attend the festivities celebrating the circumcision of Prince Mehmed, later to reign as Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603). An erstwhile weapon of attack which in the course of time had become less than functional was the *bozdoğan* (*Pusican* in German). However, it took on a new role as an insignia of rank, carried by the chiefs of the Polish nobility; the sultans also granted *bozdoğans* to the princes of Transylvania upon their accession.

Commanders of all ranks sported horse-tails (*tuğ*), in greater or lesser numbers according to the office obtained. One such *tuğ*, also part of the

collection of Archduke Ferdinand, will symbolize the Ottoman hierarchy of command. Highly decorated tents were also insignia of rank, and due to the embroideries and other workmanship involved, were highly prized by elite Ottomans and non-Ottomans alike. As such tents took time to disassemble, they were sometimes left on the battlefield; and this situation explains why these items survive not only in Istanbul repositories, but also in Poland, Austria, and southern Germany.

But in my view, the most remarkable representative of 'the material culture' of peacemaking is a set of little heaps of stone, covered by earth and each supporting a sapling. For as the visual and written testimonies left by Luigi Ferdinando Marsili show, if the border that Ottomans, Habsburgs and Venetians had decided upon in 1699 had been permanent – which it was not – ultimately there would have been a row of trees demarcating the transition from one empire to the other. Unfortunately the comments of Marsili's interlocutor have not survived, or have not as yet surfaced; but the acerbic account of Nu'man Efendi, who had to undertake a similarly thankless task in 1740, can serve as a counterpart to the rather upbeat reports of Marsili.

As for the next two chapters, they deal with the elementary needs of food, drink and clothing. As edibles have not survived, we will focus on the often luxurious vessels in which items of nourishment appeared on the food tray (*sofra*). Apart from the latter, the presentation includes good-quality blue-and-white plates, coffee cups 'made in Kütahya' and some highly decorated spoons from the late sixteenth century. We may thus assume that even for people who could not afford the expensive İznik-ware, or who used it only on special occasions, there were cheaper but elegant alternatives available.

We have much more choice when it comes to clothes and objects intended for 'home decoration'. Admittedly, few caftans older than the 1700s have survived outside the sultans' palace. However, the collector's ambitions of Archduke Ferdinand have ensured the survival of a turban and shoes that must be older than the late 1500s, as they are on record in the catalogues of his collection dated to that time. As for the eighteenth century, Hungarian museums contain decorative though still functional leather coats, of the kind that Ottoman commanders might have worn; and a coat of similar make has survived in a chateau in northern Bavaria, a memento that its former owner had brought back from the Habsburg–Ottoman war of 1787–91. From the late 1700s, moreover, the Sadberk Hanım Museum preserves three women's dresses, one of which will be presented here.

Among the items decorating a wealthy home, carpets take pride of place, a very popular type having been documented in the paintings of

Lorenzo Lotto. They are today known by the name of this artist, although the latter had nothing to do with carpet manufacture and may not even have owned the artwork that he painted with such eagerness. In addition, owners of wealthy homes and their guests would lean against elaborately decorated cushions of Bursa silk; in some cases these precious items might be sold to aficionados from Latinate Europe, who in turn donated them to local churches. Quite a few cushion covers from the 1600s owe their survival to such recycling.

As for the last chapter, it focuses on earth, water, fire and air, a categorization of the known world inherited from antiquity and used by Ottoman cosmographers as well. All four 'elements' are essential to human survival; and then, as now, if correctly used they are part – and in fact the most important part – of the bounties of nature. Beautiful tulips have inspired both practical gardeners and Ottoman literati, while a handsome faience, a product of the earth, must have dispensed water to the inhabitants of a town somewhere in south-eastern Anatolia. A masonry stove in the Bosnian style should have controlled fire and permitted the inhabitants of Ottoman Budin to keep warm even in the middle of a harsh winter. A dispenser of rose water stands for the benefits of sweet-smelling air.

Yet at the same time, the elements were the source of the greatest dangers: the earth might quake, water caused floods, conflagrations were a constant threat to the lives and properties of Istanbul residents, and storms caused ships to sink. But these aspects are difficult to document in objects or images, although they are on record in many written sources. Scholars have speculated that an early woodcut documents the damage due to the earthquake of 1509, which badly affected several newly constructed buildings in Ottoman Istanbul. But perhaps what looks like a crack in a building is simply a defect in a printed image.¹⁰⁹ No depictions of a flood seem to be available; and to my knowledge there survives but a single miniature showing Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi saving a ship about to sink.¹¹⁰ Nor did painters often depict fires; but two miniatures showing disasters of this kind do exist; and one of them will stand in for all the catastrophes that an unmediated encounter with earth, water, fire and air might bring in its wake. These challenges are common to humankind; and the flow of objects and images that the present study attempts to examine takes on additional significance vis-à-vis the daily struggles of men and women trying to cope with the forces of nature and the environment.

'Sampling the goods'

After taking his/her prospective customers through the store, a good salesperson may offer his/her possible clients a sample of the goods on

offer; and in a book such as this, dedicated to luxury goods, it is a good idea to do likewise. We will thus begin with a quintessentially Ottoman item, namely a carpet; and our example will be the 'Holbein' carpet from the Bavarian National Museum in Munich (see Plate 0). Presumably it had been knotted in western Anatolia; but for the period preceding the 1800s, we know very little about the exact towns and villages where carpets were manufactured for sale. The geometrical designs typical of Anatolian carpets go back a long way, certainly to the Seljuk period.

We are rather fortunate in having a 'real' item at our disposal; for while at first glance, carpets seem to be very solid, their survival often depends on chance.¹¹¹ They can be lost in fires or ruined by prolonged exposure to water; and perhaps, more importantly, they attract moths, which can destroy a carpet beyond redemption within a few days or weeks. As already noted, for the period beginning in the late 1500s and ending in the early 1700s, the author of a detailed study of carpets painted by artists from the northern and southern Netherlands has located almost a thousand pictures showing Indian, Persian, and mainly Ottoman carpets.¹¹² On the other hand, Onno Ydema has also pointed out that only a small number of the carpets once found in the Low Countries have survived to our time. Certainly, we must make allowance for the fact that some carpets have appeared in more than one painting. Thus perhaps the number of 'real' carpets once available in the Netherlands was smaller than appears by simply counting the available images. But even with due allowance for this fact, most carpets from the 1600s must have been lost.

As a result art historians since the late nineteenth century have focused on reproductions in imagery from Latin Europe, in addition to surviving carpets and carpet fragments. After all, to some extent, these paintings permit dating. Differently from textiles, normally undated, certain pictures from early modern Europe include a date, or else the time of production is known because art historians have produced reasonably reliable chronologies of the works of the major artists at issue. Manuscripts from the Islamic world, and thus the images of textiles they contain, also often carry dates. But the detailed depiction of carpets, after all a familiar sight, was not as high a priority for Ottoman miniature painters as for European patrons and artists, for whom the possession of such an item was often a matter of high prestige.

In consequence, scholars have named design varieties typical of Ottoman carpets for artists of the Italian and Northern Renaissance who have often depicted them. We have already encountered 'Lotto' carpets; and another example is worth a closer look: Hans Holbein the Younger, who spent a lengthy period of his professional life in England, produced quite a few depictions of carpets featuring small, or more rarely large

octagons; and here, we will present one such item. However, we need to keep in mind that the so-called 'Holbein' designs remained popular for a long period. Thus some of the carpets depicted by this artist may well have been made decades before the painter got to see them. Other pieces may have been knotted in the second half of the sixteenth century or even later, long after Hans Holbein had apparently succumbed to the plague in 1543. We have more detailed evidence for a comparable situation in the case of a so-called 'Memling' rug, which occurs in paintings of Hans Memling (1430–94). But carpets of that type never went out of fashion and were being produced as late as the eighteenth and even the nineteenth century.¹¹³ Paintings thus often provide only a *terminus ante quem*, a date by which the carpet must have been in circulation, but not a time of manufacture.

We have no information on the esteem that certain designs may have enjoyed in the eyes of aficionados belonging to the Ottoman elite; for differently from Chinese literati of the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1912) periods, who liked to describe their material possessions in writing, we have already noted that Ottoman owners did not often mention the manufactured items they owned, be they silks, jewels or carpets. On the other hand, Holbein's paintings, and those of his successors, demonstrate the admiration which these designs enjoyed in northern and western Europe. Thus Henry VIII (r. 1509–47) had himself and his descendants depicted together on a Holbein carpet.¹¹⁴ But wealthy non-royals also might possess and cherish these items: a painting of two educated young Frenchmen, known as *The Ambassadors*, today in the National Gallery, London, also features a Holbein carpet. This image, with its visual enigmas and scientific instruments, has been often studied.¹¹⁵ A Holbein carpet also features in this artist's portrait of Georg Gisze, a merchant from Gdansk/Danzig with a humanist education, now in the Berlin Gemäldegalerie.¹¹⁶ Furthermore around 1604, an unknown painter showed the English and Spanish negotiators taking part in the Somerset House Conference, which finally ended the long war between the two kingdoms, as seated on both sides of a table covered by a magnificent Holbein carpet.¹¹⁷ After all, as these textiles were expensive, people tended to avoid stepping on them; and they featured as wall hangings or table-coverings, as in the pictures referred to here. But what did English, French or Gdansk users see in an Ottoman carpet, apart from a colourful, costly status symbol? Unfortunately, we have no idea.

CHAPTER 1

REUSING THE WORK OF PAST TIMES AND FOREIGN LANDS

This book focuses on exchanges of material objects and designs between the Ottoman realm and ‘the world around it’. Therefore we will begin with a survey of some of the polities and cultures that subjects of the sultans encountered in the course of the empire’s expansion from petty principality on the margins of the Islamic world to one of the major empires of the early modern period. When the Ottomans arrived in Anatolia, sometime in the 1200s, they needed to cope not only with the local political and military situation, but also confronted the material remains left by Ionian Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Seljuks and Mongols. Once the Balkans had become part of the Ottoman domains, from the fourteenth century onward, the heritage of the Serbian and Bosnian kingdoms also entered the picture. On the Aegean islands, there was a significant Venetian presence, which lasted until the conquest of Crete (1669); and only in 1715 did Venice completely withdraw from the eastern Mediterranean. Contacts of the islanders with Italy have left traces in material culture, especially in textile designs.

Moreover, once Selim I (r. 1512–20) had eliminated the Mamlūk Sultanate and controlled Egypt, Greater Syria, and the Hejaz, the empire also incorporated the material culture remaining in these regions from the Fatimid, Ayyūbid, and Mamlūk periods. In consequence certain ‘objets de vertu’ including covers and keys of the Kaaba in Mecca, once decommissioned, passed into the keeping of the Ottoman sultans. Previously, caring for the Kaaba had been a prerogative of the Mamlūk sultans, jealously guarded. Given the importance of these objects for the legitimization of Ottoman rule, assuming and reinterpreting the Mamlūk inheritance was of paramount significance.

Viewed from a broader perspective, devising the adjustments necessary for rendering objects of non-Ottoman manufacture acceptable to elite

subjects of the sultans, and sometimes to people not part of the ruling cadres but somewhat wealthy and educated, may have been quite a delicate matter. Religious concerns determined the decision to leave certain Byzantine mosaics or paintings visible, or else make them disappear: to mention one example, many mosaics decorating Aya Sofya were seen by Muslim and non-Muslim visitors down to the mid eighteenth century with only the faces covered.¹ Evidently the understanding of what was a proper environment for solemn prayers changed considerably between the time of Mehmed the Conqueror (r. 1451–81) on the one hand, and that of Mahmud I (r. 1730–54) and Osman III (r. 1754–57) on the other; for in the 1700s, the mosaics disappeared under coats of plaster and paint. Similarly the frontier lords campaigning in the Balkans, who sponsored the dervish lodge of Seyyid Gazi near Eskişehir in western Anatolia, may have had a reason unknown to us for decorating the building with a (re-employed) statue of a lion.² As the latter is still there, presumably it did not offend religious sensibilities very much.

Quite obviously, it is an arbitrary move to select a very few examples from the hundreds of surviving artefacts possessing some connection to the Seljuks, Byzantines, or Timurids – put differently, testifying to the existence of ‘transcultural’ ramifications. Throughout, this study focuses, as far as possible, on artwork belonging to rich people who were not denizens of the palace. However, interactions with Iran and India can – at least to my limited knowledge – be documented only by means of the Topkapı Palace collections. Images of Indian elephants did not survive anywhere else, and more astonishingly, the same thing seems to be true of Iranian textiles. In addition, as the properties of servitors to the sultan were largely confiscated after their deaths (see the Introduction) many goods originally intended for members of the elite wound up in the sultans’ palace. Thus the collections of the Topkapı Sarayı are the principal resource for anyone interested in Ottoman elite culture.

The Mongols: present yet all but invisible

If the traditions of the early Ottomans reflect reality at least to a reasonable extent, the dynasty must have become a local power in north-western Anatolia when the Mongol Il-khans of Iran dominated the area; for the latter had defeated the Seljuk sultan at the Anatolian site of Köseadağı in 1243, and in the later 1200s the lands of the now evanescent sultanate came to be controlled by Mongol governors.

However, Il-khanid rule did not much occupy later Ottoman chroniclers.³ In early texts, written in the courtly environment of the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the sultans at the beginning of

the 1300s, with their capital in Bursa, appeared as vassals of the Seljuks. This, though, is a very dubious claim, as by that time the Seljuk dynasty had lost most of its power; and it actually disappeared from the political scene during the first decade of the fourteenth century. On the contrary, it must have been the Mongol rulers of Iran to whom the Ottoman sultans paid allegiance, until the rule of the Il-khans also collapsed after 1335.

Why did Ottoman chroniclers writing before and after 1500, when historical works became a recognized genre, prefer to claim a connection to the Seljuks? Perhaps this choice was due to the destruction of the early Ottoman Empire of Bayezid I (r. 1389–1402) by another Mongol ruler, namely Timur (r. 1370–1405). Between 1402 and his death in 1405, Timur had also been the overlord of Bayezid's descendants, whom the Mongol conqueror apparently viewed as subordinate dynasts ruling mainly over the Balkans, where the Mongol armies of the late 1300s and early 1400s had not penetrated. These memories may not have been something that a writer working around 1500 and hoping for official Ottoman patronage would have wanted to emphasize. Contemporaries must also have known that the early Il-khans and many of their servitors were not Muslims; in this perspective as well, it was less problematic to refer to the Seljuks who were good Muslims and had never been at war with the Ottomans. Thus, documents, inscriptions or funerary monuments from the period of Mongol overlordship, which do exist in Anatolia albeit in small numbers, apparently did not much feature in Ottoman historical consciousness.

The Seljuks

Remarkably, most material remains of the Seljuk sultanate and its successor, the principality of Karaman, do not seem to have played a major role in the consciousness of the Ottoman elite either. A major reason was surely the fact that the successive Ottoman capitals of Edirne and Istanbul had never been part of the Seljuk sultanate, while Seljuk overlordship over the earlier principality, while still based in Bursa, had been nebulous at best. There was thus little motivation to reuse, for instance, the summer palace known as Kubadabad near Lake Beyşehir. But after the Ottoman conquest of Konya in the mid 1400s, the inheritance left by scholars and mystics such as Sadreddin-i Konevi (c. 1210–74) and Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi (1207–73) did make a major impression. The lodge and mausoleum of the latter, soon the centre of the Mevlevi order of dervishes, was located at a distance from Konya's mediaeval centre. But the Ottoman sultans accorded the inhabitants of the town quarter surrounding the lodge (Türbe-i Celaliye or mausoleum of Celaleddin) significant tax exemptions,

in return for which they were to serve the dervishes. In consequence, by the late 1500s it had become one of Konya's biggest quarters. The residential section of the lodge was also an Ottoman addition; and Sultan Selim II (r. 1566–74) built a mosque complex immediately adjacent to the lodge. This structure reproduced the imperial mosque of Mehmed the Conqueror in Istanbul; presumably this choice of model served to show the sultan's devotion to the saint and his imperial presence in Konya, the capital of Karaman province.⁴ In addition many governors in charge of this region chose the neighbourhood for their own, often very elaborate, mausoleums.⁵

As for Sadreddin-i Konevi, related by marriage to the famous mystic Ibn al-ʿArabī, his library seems to have fascinated either Mehmed II or somebody from his entourage. For the new ruler had a list of the extant volumes copied into the first register of pious foundations compiled after the Ottoman conquest; and later scribes recopied it.⁶ Thus the Seljuk and post-Seljuk world of Anatolia apparently entered Ottoman elite consciousness largely through the saintly presence of scholarly mystics.

Emulating the sultans of Egypt

On the other hand, especially after the conquest of the Mamlūk sultanate in 1516–17, the Ottoman elites were confronted with the heritage of Muslim sovereigns of great prestige in the Islamic world, and whom Selim I and his successors felt it necessary to emulate. In the view of the traveller Evliya Çelebi (1611–after 1683), raised as a page of Murad IV (r. 1623–40) and thus inclined to view matters from the perspective of the Ottoman centre, the Mamlūk Sultan Kāʾit Bāy (r. 1468–96) was a model that seventeenth-century Ottoman rulers should imitate.⁷

This type of inter-empire competition had repercussions in the material world as well. The Ottoman sultans continued to support the pilgrims and inhabitants of the Holy Cities by sending large quantities of Egyptian grain. They also had a covering for the Kaaba woven in Cairo every year, as the Mamlūk sultans had done; and while in the late 1500s, some officials suggested that a light-coloured cover would better resist the sun of the Hejaz than the traditional black silk, the Ottoman sultans refrained from making any changes.⁸ They also had the keys to the Kaaba renewed with some regularity. Of less religious but great political significance was the custom of sending two litters (*mahmal*) with every hajj caravan, an event which already under Mamlūk rule had been important in the ceremonial life of Damascus and Cairo, and which the Ottoman sultans continued to sponsor. As these litters were mainly signs of political power, the Wahhabis, after occupying Mecca and rejecting

the sultan's domination of the Hejaz, in 1807 refused to let the *mahmal* pass.⁹ It thus makes sense to assume that the Ottoman rulers remained faithful to Mamlūk tradition partly out of religious considerations, but also because the practices of the mediaeval sultans of Egypt were a yardstick by which their own deeds might be measured.

The 'foreign' worlds of India and China

It is not so clear whether the emulation of Indian arts and crafts, well known to historians of Ottoman textiles and jewellery, had anything to do with inter-imperial rivalries. In the Topkapı Palace there exist jade carvings that have given rise to some discussion. For a long time, art historians and connoisseurs assumed that fine jade carving was almost exclusively practised in China. But more recently it has come to light that jade artists also worked for Timurid palaces, and later on jade carving found patrons in Mughal India and at the court in Istanbul. In this context, a jade container of probable Indian workmanship arrived in Istanbul, perhaps as a diplomatic gift, where local goldsmiths decorated it with inlays of gold and precious stones. Connoisseurs have even tried to discern the specific characteristics of Ottoman jade carving, a Chinese art that gained admirers at the sultans' court.¹⁰ While carved jade was visible only to the happy few, Indian-inspired decorations could also be found on the massive and often highly ornamented public fountains (*meydan çeşmeleri*) that mid eighteenth-century patrons put up in central locations of Istanbul.¹¹ However, we still lack documentation on the ways and means by which Indian designs may have travelled to Istanbul.

But the principal item imported from India and then imitated in the Ottoman orbit was cotton textiles. Imported prints have emerged in excavations in Old Cairo (Fustāt), showing that this trade flourished throughout the Mamlūk period (see the Introduction). But the novelty of the Ottoman eighteenth century was that manufacturers in what is today northern Syria and south-eastern Turkey successfully imitated Indian prints and even managed to export them; a few samples have come down to us, now in Marseilles.¹² But apparently the crisis caused by the Russo-Ottoman war of 1768–74 seriously damaged this industry, although perhaps it continued to supply the domestic market after exports had fallen by the wayside.

Between hostility and admiration: dealing with artefacts from Iran

But the reception of precious goods and their reuse and refashioning, which is the focus of the present discussion, was most obvious in the case

of items arriving from pre-Safavid and Safavid Iran. After all, the palace culture of Safavid Iran incorporated and continued the traditions of the Timurid palaces, especially that of Herat, which for the Ottoman elite of the 1400s and 1500s formed the *fine fleur* of courtly elegance. Firstly Safavid Iran was home to a literary culture that left a profound impression on educated Ottomans, who learned the art of poetry by studying Iranian works; translation and imitation of Iranian models for many Ottoman authors was the prelude to 'finding their own voices'.¹³ Secondly the audience for Iranian pictorial culture was significant, though probably smaller; for differently from what was customary in non-religious contexts in Safavid Iran, Ottoman architectural decoration very rarely included depictions of persons and animals. Therefore for people who had never visited Iran, the only way of access to Iranian imagery was through illustrated manuscripts. But outside the palace, these were available only to Ottoman grandees, who as we have seen, in the later sixteenth century quite often collected illustrated manuscripts from Shiraz.¹⁴

Some of the most valuable items may have arrived as booty, especially after Selim I had defeated Shah Ismā'īl I and briefly occupied Tabriz (1514). For a later period we again turn to Evliya Çelebi, who recounts that the entire decoration of a pavilion from the Tabriz Palace was brought to Istanbul in the late 1500s by an Ottoman commander fighting the Safavids. The trophy was set up in a pavilion by the Bosphorus; and Evliya claimed that lovers and practitioners of painting went to see it even in the mid seventeenth century (see the Introduction). Thus at least some members of the Istanbul elite were not seriously opposed to figurative painting outside the covers of a book.¹⁵

Many other illustrated Iranian manuscripts arrived in Istanbul as diplomatic gifts. Especially after Shah Tahmāsp had in his later years turned toward religion and away from painting, he gifted some splendid manuscripts with miniatures to the Ottoman Sultan (see the Introduction). For patrons from the Istanbul Palace, Iranian models retained their validity over the centuries.¹⁶

China: A presence made of porcelain

Located far beyond the Ottoman borders, China remained a *terra incognita* to most subjects of the sultans.¹⁷ Unlike the Timurid princes of the fifteenth century, the Ottoman sultans never sent 'tribute-bearing embassies' that provided occasions for merchants subject to the 'tribute-paying ruler' to buy and sell at their leisure.¹⁸ But in the sixteenth century, sizable quantities of Chinese porcelain did arrive in the Ottoman Empire; these goods often transited through the Hejaz; and in the 1500s and 1600s the Sharifs of

Mecca quite frequently gifted porcelain. Once these items had arrived in Istanbul, Ottoman artisans and artists adapted decorative designs of Chinese origin, not only in faience but also in textiles.¹⁹ In other cases Chinese designs became known through their Iranian adaptations.

It is still somewhat enigmatic how porcelain travelled to the Ottoman world; as it was both heavy and fragile, in most cases the merchants must have preferred transportation by sea. The Red Sea was a major conduit: some ships must have unloaded their wares in Jeddah, the port of Mecca. Others travelled all the way to Suez; this route has been documented by archaeologists, as broken coffee cups were discarded on the coast of the Sinai Peninsula.²⁰ But we do not know much about the route by which these pieces travelled, first from their place of production to a Chinese port, and from there along the coast and through the Indian Ocean to a mart in present-day India or Indonesia. As Ottoman records say nothing about Chinese junks in the Red Sea, transshipment must have occurred somewhere in the Indian Ocean, and presumably Indian Muslims took over the cargo and carried it to the Hejaz.²¹

Venice and the Habsburgs

Venice lay on the western border of the Ottoman lands. Politically speaking, the Republic lost out against the sultans so badly that by the mid 1600s, not much was left of its once famous 'Stato da Mar'. But in terms of material culture, Venice was important to the Ottoman elite as a source of luxury goods which, if desired, could be domestically processed for further use.

In the 1500s certain Venetian manufacturers produced silk fabrics intended specifically for Ottoman customers. In the Topkapı Palace Museum there survive caftans for the use of sultans, made from some of these silks.²² On the other hand, we have Bursa or Istanbul silks featuring crowns, which otherwise were completely alien to the Ottoman courtly tradition. Perhaps patrons and/or designers adopted this motif because of its resemblance to a basket of flowers; furthermore the Venetian *baili* of the 1600s imported hundreds of silk flowers, made by nuns in Bologna and probably intended as 'little presents' for casual visits.²³ Textiles intended for the highest representatives of the Ottoman elite might on occasion be sent to Venetian embroiderers.²⁴ Presumably, at the sultans' court as in other imperial centres, 'exotic goods' might be of interest due to their rarity, but also because their arrival as diplomatic gifts appeared as an acknowledgement of the Ottoman ruler's supremacy. Be that as it may, Venetian and Ottoman silks were so closely connected that a recent exhibition bore the telling name *Intrecci Mediterranei* or 'Mediterranean entanglements'.²⁵

Where the exportation of Ottoman luxuries is concerned, in the 1500s some Bursa or Istanbul fabrics must have arrived in Venice, although Italian customers did not much favour Ottoman silks. Moreover, quite a few of the pieces present in the 1500s or 1600s do not survive; for in 1797, as a result of the Napoleonic conquests in Italy, the ancient Republic of Venice was abolished; former church property was also 'up for grabs'. Ottoman brocades contained rather more gold and silver than their Venetian counterparts and therefore must have especially attracted looters, who may well have burnt the textiles to retrieve the gold and silver.²⁶

Glassware, both ordinary and of luxury quality, was also imported from Venice by Ottoman elite figures, for use in their pious foundations and presumably in their homes. However, as few wealthy residences have survived, we do not have much information on this latter destination. We know that grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa (about 1506–79) once purchased several hundred mosque lamps, which were lost in a shipwreck.²⁷ Some of these items were quite *recherché*; in fact, there survives an order with a sketch of the item desired, perhaps drawn by the *paşa* in person.²⁸ Venetian glass manufacturers had entered the Ottoman luxury market by imitating Syrian products of the later Middle Ages; the Topkapı Palace Museum owns some large and highly ornate pieces of this kind.

Furthermore Venice was a publishing centre, and some printers produced works in Greek. Greek-speaking subjects of Venice were possible buyers, but Ottoman Greek customers also existed, albeit in small numbers. A few scholars, such as those who studied and taught at the Istanbul patriarchal academy, may have been in the market for the editions of the Greek classics put out by select Venetian publishers. But many more readers must have been interested in books written in a language closer to the Greek actually spoken in the 1500s and 1600s; and it is a great pity that the catalogue of these publications, compiled by Evro Layton, does not cover material printed after 1600.²⁹

Interchanges of valuables at the Ottoman–Habsburg border are a special case. In the later 1500s, the Habsburgs paid tribute to the sultan for the narrow strip of territory called 'royal'; and to salvage the emperors' self-esteem, a sizeable part of the tribute was sent not as cash but in the shape of silver table decorations, sometimes activated by clockwork (see the Introduction).³⁰ By the mid 1700s, when Vienna had acquired a reputation for its porcelain, wealthy Ottomans and especially members of the sultans' court began to include Viennese pieces in their collections.³¹ As for the Habsburg side, Ottoman silks were quite popular especially during the 1700s, when they arrived at Maria Theresa's court as diplomatic gifts.³²

The French connection

At the end of the period treated here, in the mid nineteenth century, the Ottoman elite – and later on ‘middle-class’ townspeople as well – cherished, adopted, adjusted, criticized or rejected French artefacts and ideas with such intensity that the subject deserves a separate study. Strangely enough, no such work is as yet in existence. But even in the period under discussion here, certain members of the Ottoman elite collected information and artefacts from French sources. One of the earliest examples is surely the chronicle of French kings, adapted and translated from French-language originals by two scribes serving the head of the Ottoman chancery Feridun Ahmed Efendi.³³ This text is fascinating because it documents the ‘translation’ of French terminology, conceptualizing a feudal but centralized monarchy, into Ottoman political thinking. Presumably the translation provided ‘background information’ that the Ottoman chancery might need at a time when Francis I (r. 1515–47) had requested the aid of Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–66) against the common enemy, the Habsburgs of Spain and Austria.

Some controversy surrounds the images that the ambassador Yirmisekiz Mehmed Efendi brought back to Istanbul from his travels to Paris and Versailles in 1720. For a long time, scholars assumed that these drawings served as models for the Sadabad Palace and gardens of Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–30). While not ruling out French models completely, today’s scholars rather emphasize the garden culture of Iran as a major source of inspiration; after all, during those years, the Ottomans once again occupied Tabriz, a fact that must have revived interest in Iranian artefacts. The debate is difficult to decide as both Iranian and French garden culture of the reign of Louis XIV (r. 1643–1715) featured long straight avenues and watercourses, as opposed to the less stringently regulated set-up typical of Ottoman gardens.³⁴

Another possible ‘naturalization’ of a French cultural artefact is linked to the work of Jean Baptiste Vanmour (1671–1737), a painter in the service of various European ambassadors, but who also seems to have had students/followers in Istanbul. Most of these men, who for instance produced views of Ankara and Izmir, were not major artists; but they helped to popularize the notion of decorative landscape painting, which became popular among Ottoman patrons of the 1700s and 1800s.

Collection and reuse

Many items concerning us here have survived in collections, especially, as noted, in those of the sultans’ palace. Collecting is a form of reuse; and with the emergence of private collectors and museums in present-day Turkey, this issue has come to interest historians as well. That Mehmed the

Conqueror was known to collect books probably had something to do with the interest which his officials showed in the library of Sadreddin-i Konevi; yet it is worth noting that the books stayed in Konya rather than being taken to the palace in Istanbul. Ottoman sultans collected Chinese porcelain or jade carvings, although in the case of porcelain, practical considerations seemingly predominated: the monarch and his courtiers sometimes ate from bowls and chargers produced in Jingdezhen.³⁵ Similarly grandees around 1600 were enamoured of Shiraz miniatures; and many illustrated manuscripts from the workshops of this city thus survive in the former collections of dignitaries serving the sultan.³⁶

Perhaps partly due to the current emphasis on recycling in everyday life, the reuse of architectural and other remnants of earlier cultures has recently become a 'hot topic' among art historians and archaeologists.³⁷ If recycling bins had not begun to appear on the street corners of Istanbul's affluent Nişantaşı neighbourhood, our series of artefacts would probably not have begun with a Roman gravestone reused as the door jamb of a provincial mosque. But scholars focusing on such recycling usually are interested in those cases where, at least to some extent, we can grasp the intentions of the people who ordered and financed the proceedings. In the present case, however, it is likely that the Roman gravestone was reused simply because it was close at hand; and probably no ulterior considerations were involved. But in later chapters, we will encounter cases in which the intentions of the people responsible for a given type of reuse are easier to grasp (see Chapters 5 and 7).

As noted, Augsburg and Nuremberg silver garnered at most a passing interest before being melted down, and the same fate befell many other items about which we have no information. The Ottoman Palace quite often sold off Chinese porcelain which the sultan and/or his officials did not consider worth keeping; and something similar may have befallen silks, furs, or carpets.³⁸ Last but not least, it is worth noting that few provincial notables and magnates of the 1700s and early 1800s made reputations for themselves as collectors, apart from Osman Pazvantoglu (1758–1807), who built a famous library in Vidin.³⁹ Other exceptions included Esad Paşa, governor of Sivas, who in the mid 1700s assembled a porcelain collection.⁴⁰ As a result, our knowledge of the elite material culture of Istanbul is fragmentary indeed, to say nothing of Anatolia and the Balkans.

(PLATE 1) A ROMAN GRAVESTONE AS THE DOOR JAMB OF A MOSQUE

As a comparison of the relevant maps will show, the Ottoman sultans ruled over a large area that had once been part of the Roman Empire.

While the Romans controlled more territory in the West, the armies of the sultans had successfully expanded into regions once governed by the Parthians and Sasanids; when campaigning against these powers Roman emperors by contrast had been badly defeated and even taken prisoner. The Ottoman Empire also had a greater impact on the Arabian Peninsula than that of the Romans, even at its height.

But in Egypt, Greater Syria, Anatolia and the Balkans, the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire quite frequently encountered vestiges of Roman constructions, some of which they continued to use.⁴¹ Thus a Roman bridge near the town of Adıyaman was open to traffic even in the 1970s, and may well have served travellers ever since it had been built. More frequently Roman stones, especially columns, provided patrons of the sixteenth century with readily available building material. Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1522–92), who passed İzmit in the mid 1500s, saw workmen pulling down Roman ruins, and his contemporary Petrus Gyllius made the same observation.⁴² Sometimes columns were cut up to decorate the façade of a building with a sequence of round stones, which contrasted with the rectangular items making up the remainder of the wall; an example can be seen at the entrance to the Ankara citadel. But for the most part large monoliths, such as columns or *stelae*, were reused as such; in Ottoman Ankara many modest mosques, which when viewed from the outside much resembled private dwellings, contained Roman columns with their capitals.⁴³ However, sometimes the supports used might be too short and had to be extended in a rather haphazard fashion. This issue continues to interest both Roman and Ottomanist historians.

It has often been claimed that Ottoman Ankara was a place of no significance; and certainly, the town was in crisis when it became the capital of the Turkish Republic in 1923. For during the 1800s Ankara, previously an important centre of interregional and to some extent even international trade, had suffered serious decline due to the disappearance of its earlier monopoly in the production of angora yarn and fabrics. Moreover, during the mid nineteenth century and the following decades, a series of droughts had struck the region, resulting in numerous deaths of people and animals.⁴⁴ After the railway had made for a degree of recovery in the 1890s and early 1900s, the town was hit by a disastrous fire in 1916, which partly explains its desolate appearance in the 1920s.⁴⁵

However, once Ankara had become the Turkish capital, archaeologists began to investigate the city's past and discovered the importance of its Roman and early modern avatars.⁴⁶ Greek and Latin inscriptions from the city and surroundings have been published and studied, particularly the *Res Gestae* of the first Roman emperor Augustus (r. 27 BCE–14 CE). After all, the best-preserved version of this piece of political propaganda survives in

Ankara's Temple of Augustus and Roma. Many Galatian aristocrats also documented their acculturation into the Roman world by inscriptions showcasing themselves as priests of empire-wide cults.

But more modest people also left their mark through inscriptions put up in their names in Ankara and environs. One of them, concerning a certain Flavius Audax, was published for the first time in 1599–1601; yet the editor did not know its whereabouts, claiming it was located 'somewhere in Greece'.⁴⁷ We do not know where the stone had been between the Roman and Ottoman periods; but probably it had remained in Ankara or the immediate vicinity. Since the late 1600s or early 1700s, when the İbadullah mosque was built according to the architectural historian Gönül Öney, this inscribed stone has featured as a door jamb of the mosque entrance. Now the most recent editors of the inscription have dated the İbadullah mosque to the 1500s, without stating their reasons for rejecting Öney's date.⁴⁸ If their estimate is correct, the inscription should already have been part of the building when European antiquarians first accessed it.

The İbadullah mosque consists of a rectangular hall of brickwork and masonry with an adjacent high minaret, preceded by a gallery (*son cemaat yeri*) now walled up, which was originally open and accommodated visitors who arrived late and found the mosque overcrowded.⁴⁹ These characteristics were generic, to the point that Gönül Öney has referred to an 'Ankara school' of mosque building.⁵⁰ Due to clumsy restorations, nothing much remains of the decorative painting that once animated the interior of the building. Perhaps this mosque was part of the rebuilding that followed serious earthquake damage to Ankara during the 1660s. Given the modesty of the overall construction, the door jamb was surely not chosen for any special qualities, or as a valuable antique, as sometimes happened in sultanate construction projects. Rather, the stone probably entered the building because it was easily available.

According to the inscription, Flavius Audax was a Roman legionary of Germanic background, deceased when serving in one of the campaigns of Trajan (r. 98–117) or Marcus Aurelius (r. 161–80); as the gravestone does not contain a date, the lifetime of this officer is conjectural. As a man of foreign background, Flavius Audax could have borne the name of the gens Flavia because this was the 'tribe' that the emperor Vespasian (r. 69–79) and his sons had belonged to. Or else Audax had become a Flavius because an ancestor had been a freedman of one of the Flavian emperors (r. 69–96). He may have come from a family of soldiers, as 'Audax' means 'bold'.⁵¹ At the time of his death, Flavius Audax probably did not have a family nearby. For on Roman gravestones, it was common to record the name of the person who had put it up, as well as his/her

relationship to the deceased. In this case, the relevant name belonged to a fellow military man, probably of some substance since the *stela* was reasonably well made.

For our purposes, this evidence of recycling is of interest as it symbolizes the fact that Anatolia was never a *tabula rasa*; and knowingly or unknowingly residents of the area even now confront the region's long history. Ankara's present-day inhabitants have in fact taken an interest: the inscription is now easily legible because somebody has outlined the letters in blue paint (as seen in 2013).

(PLATE 2) REVERENCE FOR MECCA AND MEDINA

As the pilgrimage to Mecca is an obligation for any Muslim with the necessary means, a tradition emerged of presenting the sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina as topographic depictions. Written explanations might help the viewer make sense of the images. In the Middle Ages and the sixteenth century, such depictions might appear on pilgrimage certificates, made out if a person performed the pilgrimage in the name of someone else, a permissible substitution; sometimes the religious merit of a pilgrimage might even go to a person already deceased. Upon his return, the 'substitute' pilgrim would need to demonstrate that he had performed all the required rituals, for which purpose he might procure a properly witnessed diploma.⁵² People also made prayer carpets with a depiction of the Kaaba; but in 1610 a command from the chief jurisconsult (*şeyhülislam*) to the carpet weavers of Kütahya forbade this practice, as it was improper to step on this holy place with one's feet.⁵³ However, occasionally such carpets continued to be made, as apparent from an example that came to the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art (Istanbul) from the mausoleum of Sultan Alaeddin in Konya, and which experts date to the eighteenth century.⁵⁴

In the 1600s, patrons sponsored artists' depictions of the sanctuaries in Mecca and Medina on tile panels put up in public places such as mosques or schools.⁵⁵ Occasionally they also graced non-religious sites, such as a pavilion of the Topkapı Palace. Inscriptions or foundation documents do not often explain the motivations of the people financing this imagery; perhaps the depictions of Mecca and Medina were to console pious persons unable to perform the pilgrimage. Or perhaps the idea was to remind the faithful of this fundamental obligation, which some people with the necessary means tended to put off: Evliya Çelebi recorded that although he had criss-crossed the empire for decades, he only set out for Mecca when he was approaching 60 and had experienced a dream that he seems to have interpreted as an admonition to finally undertake this duty.⁵⁶

Today many panels depicting Mecca and Medina have been taken to museums; and it is not always possible to say whether those still in mosques or schools remain in their original places. The quality of the execution varies widely; while there are some items produced by sophisticated draftsmen, others are quite rustic. Thus an item in the Bursa museum, dated to 1085/1674–75, identifies the donor as a certain Yağcı Hasan, from the village of Karaca Ali (?) in the district of Yenişehir, a small town near Bursa.⁵⁷ The lettering is very crude; but the explanations identify the Prophet's pulpit, the stations of the prayer-leaders of Hanefi and Maliki schools of law, the well of Zemzem, and the drainpipe of gilt silver (*altun oluk*) that since the time of Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) removed the rainwater that might fall onto the roof of the Kaaba.⁵⁸

The seventeenth-century single tile from the Sadberk Hanım Museum in Istanbul, provenance unknown, also shows the Prophet's pulpit, the station (*makam*) of İbrāhīm and those of the Şafī'is, Malikis and Hanefis.⁵⁹ As for the well of Zemzem, the draftsman has indicated its presence by six jars, which must have served for storing the water. A sequence of arches stands for the gallery surrounding the Great Mosque, apparently illuminated by a multitude of hanging lamps.

While those features of the sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina going back to the early Islamic period carried most religious significance, the sponsors and artists also showed considerable interest in the renovations made in Ottoman times. Many panels showed the numerous small domes that cover the gallery surrounding the courtyard of the Great Mosque. Only on smaller images, such as the item in the Sadberk Hanım Museum, do we not see the domes covering the gallery; and such abbreviated versions also omitted the gates that more elaborate depictions always featured. Apparently sixteenth-century sultans and viziers felt that domes were somehow a symbol of the Ottoman presence; and at one point they planned to put up 500 of them. Probably the expense involved prevented immediate realization; but as a gouache on paper from the 1600s or 1700s shows, and other eighteenth-century images confirm, three rows of flat domes were ultimately built, forming a wide gallery.⁶⁰ The latter surrounded the courtyard until quite recently, when the Saudi government decided to remove them – supposedly because the sheer multitude of pilgrims left no other choice.

Minarets were another powerful symbol of the Ottoman presence; and the authorities made sure that at least some of the minarets of the Great Mosque in Mecca were erected in the Ottoman style. That is, they were relatively slender, had more than one gallery for the muezzin, and featured high conical roofs. When the Sultan Ahmed mosque was built in Istanbul during the early 1600s, the ruler wanted a building with six

minarets; until that time, only the Great Mosque of Mecca had possessed six – later seven – of these structures.⁶¹ The tile from the Sadberk Hanım Museum, eighteenth-century illustrations in prayer books, and also the gouache previously mentioned, all show seven minarets entirely in the Ottoman style, although in reality some of them were much older.⁶² Probably piecemeal ‘Ottomanization’ had taken place whenever repairs became necessary. However, compared with their Istanbul counterparts, these minarets appear short and squat, as confirmed by early twentieth-century photographs.

In addition, there are at least two images of the Great Mosque with only six minarets; given the rustic character of the tile put up by Yağcı Hasan, this omission may simply have been due to lack of information. But an approximately contemporary tile inserted into the decoration of the Rüstem Paşa mosque in Istanbul also shows only six minarets. Perhaps the two draftsmen had copied the same model, which predated the construction of the seventh minaret.⁶³ Admittedly, it remains unknown which particular patrons and artists considered up-to-date information on the building fabric of the Great Mosque as important; some of them may have felt that a generic image was quite satisfactory. But the presence of seven minarets in quite a few panels shows that other craftsmen did not simply copy older models; perhaps certain patrons even chose the more ‘modern’ shape because they wished to highlight the contribution of the Ottoman sultans to this holy site.

On the tile in the Sadberk Hanım Museum we find flecks of reddish-brown paint just above the muezzins’ balconies; they may be windows or else the doors giving access to the balconies. Hopefully in the long run, the genealogy of these images will become a little clearer.

(PLATE 3) IRANIAN INSPIRATIONS FOR OTTOMAN CARPETS

We have noted – yet it bears repeating – that when in the fifteenth century, Ottoman sultans began to put their persons and domains ‘on the map’, in the sense of sponsoring an elite culture, the normative aesthetic in tilework, miniatures and book illumination had been defined by the Timurid courts, that of Shāhrokh (r. 1405–47) in Samarkand and especially Husayn Bāykarā (r. 1469–1506) in Herat. Throughout the 1400s and 1500s, members of the Ottoman elite collected artwork from the Iranian lands.⁶⁴ Perhaps playing on the prestige of this courtly culture, the Venetians in the early 1600s had a painting depicting the gift of a magnificent carpet by a Safavid ambassador to the Doge exhibited in the chamber where Ottoman envoys customarily waited for an audience.⁶⁵

While frequent Ottoman–Safavid wars must have interrupted the flow of artwork at times, in some cases the exact opposite was true. Thus when Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–20) conquered Tabriz in 1514 but had to leave the city shortly afterwards (see the Introduction), he took with him a large number of artists, scholars and artisans – some of them were in fact recent arrivals from Khorasān, as Shah Ismāʿīl I (r. 1501–24) had earlier on collected ‘men of skill’ from this region for his own court.⁶⁶ No source records the thoughts and feelings of these people as they trekked thousands of kilometres to satisfy the demands of a foreign conqueror.

Yet quite a few of these people remained in Ottoman service for the remainder of their lives, although Selim’s successor, Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520–66), permitted those that wished to do so to return home. In any case, the artwork that Sultan Selim and his commanders brought back remained in Istanbul, and must have continued to provide models.

Many masters working for the palace, the men from Tabriz included, trained apprentices; some of the latter may have worked for many years in a subordinate capacity to acquire the skills demanded by the Ottoman court.⁶⁷ The earliest list of artisans/artists working for the Ottoman Palace, the *ehl-i hiref* registers, contained the names of painters (*nakkaş*) including the celebrated Şahkulu.⁶⁸ In addition there was a group of carpet weavers (*kalîce-bafân*). Some of the latter had been working for the palace since the time of Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512), and one of them even went back to the reign of Mehmed the Conqueror (r. 1451–81).

Interestingly, some of these carpet weavers had entered the monarch’s service through the levy of boys (*devşirme*) and thus must have been born as non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman sultans. Thus some carpet artists were not from Iran at all, but from the Balkan provinces, including Kosovo and Bosnia. As for those men whose background was not on record, one or two may have been Egyptian ex-prisoners taken as youths during the Ottoman–Mamlūk war (1485–91) and perhaps familiar with the carpet traditions of Cairo. Whatever the situation, people from the Balkans and Egypt could not have transferred the know-how of Iranian manufacturers to Istanbul.

However, it was probably the painters (*nakkaş*) of Iranian background who produced the designs most favoured by the Ottoman elite; and the carpet weavers only adapted them for the loom. Unfortunately, as nothing remains of the carpets woven in the late 1400s, we do not know to what extent Iranian designs had found favour at the Ottoman court already before the Safavids appeared on the scene.

On the other hand, the Anatolian manufacturers, who must have established sophisticated urban workshops although we know very little

about their locations, produced textiles of a totally different type. While in the fifteenth century, some Anatolian rugs had featured stylized animals, this motif went out of fashion later on. Thereafter, Anatolian carpets of the Ottoman period were ornamented with geometric designs, some of which remained popular over centuries while others were in vogue only for a few decades (see the Introduction).⁶⁹ Rectangles and octagons were in frequent use; and this tradition did not include curvilinear designs.

By contrast, carpet artists working in accordance with the Iranian tradition in the 1500s developed designs with motifs involving many curves. This style soon became dominant in depictions of plants and flowers, and also in inscriptions. In addition, designers working for the Safavid court and its grandees quite often depicted people and animals, princely hunts being a special favourite. Thus there must have been a clear separation between carpets meant for mosques and those destined for palaces, as images of people and animals would have been permissible only in a non-religious context.

A letter sent by Shah Tahmāsp to Sultan Süleyman, upon the conclusion of the peace of Amasya (1555) or else upon the inauguration of the Süleymaniye (1557) offered to have the Shah's ambassador measure the new mosque, so that Iranian workshops could produce carpets well adapted to their future site.⁷⁰ Given this proposal, the textiles that the Shah offered to send must have been specially designed for placement in a sanctuary: in other words avoiding the images of humans and beasts. By contrast, most Anatolian or Egyptian carpets did not normally show characteristics that would indicate their intended use, whether religious or non-religious.

As inheritance inventories from many Ottoman towns make clear, prayer rugs (*seccade*) belonged to the basic outfits of Muslims, however poor, who took them along when travelling. However, often these items were quite cheap; and it remains unclear whether they were kilims, embroidered fabrics, or simple felts. Wealthy people certainly possessed knotted rugs; and in certain mosques there were large carpets with niche designs in rows (*saf*), allowing several people to pray on the same textile. A particularly impressive specimen from the years around 1600 comes from the Selimiye mosque in Edirne and survives in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art in Istanbul.⁷¹ A similar piece, probably from the early 1700s, shows the colours and shapes characteristic of Uşak manufacture, which flourished particularly during the seventeenth century.⁷²

But most prayer rugs probably belonged to a single individual. Such items normally featured an arch; when laid out on the ground, the point of the latter indicated the direction of Mecca. Thus the design served as a portable prayer niche or *mihrap*. Columns might support the arch; in some

designs the latter appeared as actual architectural features, with bases and capitals rather resembling the 'Corinthian' form of antiquity. At times a lamp hung from the top of the arch resembling the mosque lamps of Syrian – or occasionally Venetian – manufacture used in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (compare Chapter 4).⁷³ Often the spandrels featured more or less naturalistic flower motifs; and in many cases the arch and spandrels did not occupy the entire surface made available by the outer frame of the textile. Thus there remained a broad band above the top of the arch, filled with small-scale abstract designs.

However, in the splendid prayer carpet today in the Museum für Angewandte Kunst (MAK) in Vienna, which experts date to the mid 1500s, the designers have omitted the band topping the arch as well as the columns and lamp, so as to gain space for an opulently flowering plant that fills the entire niche. Feathery serrated leaves, also known as *saz* foliage and stylized blossoms on a red ground convey the impression of a garden in springtime, with the blue-green that is the other dominant colour enhancing this impression; perhaps an allusion to Paradise was intended. The rug shows the Iranian-style curvilinear designs that had come to Istanbul, the prayer rug shown here being an especially fine example. Perhaps the owner wished to convey his appreciation for the new mode, which differed so sharply from the angular designs popular in Anatolia over the centuries.

The carpet at issue has a sizeable number of 'cousins'; put differently the motifs encountered in the MAK exemplar have been combined and recombined quite frequently so as to produce similar but not identical pieces. Some of these mutually related carpets have a central niche filled with compositions of flowers and *saz* leaves, while in other cases the niche is empty. The main border of the carpet in the MAK must have been in quite a popular style, as it closely resembles the decorative frames ornamenting carpets today in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Specialists assume that these pieces were made in Istanbul/Bursa on the one hand and in Cairo on the other. But the masters working in both these centres must have had access to a variety of models, perhaps procured by the patrons.⁷⁴

Unlike their Iranian counterparts, Ottoman prayer rugs did not normally contain inscriptions; and the piece shown here conforms to this custom. By way of explanation, it is surely significant that in the early 1600s a Chief Mufti (*şeyhülislam*) had objected to the decoration of rugs with prayer niches (*mihrap*), images of the Kaaba and inscriptions, with the argument that these pieces might be bought by 'infidels', who should not be able to acquire items of Islamic religious character. Accordingly a sultanic command prohibited these designs.⁷⁵ Certainly this order did not end the manufacture of prayer rugs with *mihrap*s, at least not in the long

run; but fulminations of this kind may well have been in the minds of Ottoman designers. In addition, we do not know whether all carpets featuring niches really were reserved for prayer, or whether they might be used for secular purposes as well. In Iran the latter must have been true; a carpet dated to 1220/1805 contains a niche whose arch consists of two sitting lions and two jumping foxes; but otherwise the design features the flower vase and lamp known from prayer rugs.⁷⁶

(PLATE 4) AN INDIAN STRANGER IN THE OTTOMAN WORLD:
THE ELEPHANT

In India, elephants were and are high-status animals, certain Hindus considering them divine even today. Images of these creatures, in the shape of 'Lord Ganesh(a)' a human figure with an elephant head, thus form part of certain present-day religious practices and festivities.⁷⁷ More remarkably, the Mughal emperors not only had elephants at their court, which they sometimes used in war, they also commissioned elephant sculptures; and when the palace known as the Red Fort was built in seventeenth-century Delhi, two elephant sculptures ornamented one of the gates.

For Ottoman viewers, by contrast, elephants were exotic creatures. It is not always clear how these animals travelled from India to Istanbul, as apparently the Mughals and the Ottoman sultans only began exchanging embassies in the 1600s. Thus the elephants present in Istanbul before that time must have been brought in by other means. In 1515, the Mamlūk sultan Kānsūh al-Ghūrī passed on an elephant that he had received from India to Selim I, who was to conquer his domains only a year later.⁷⁸ There is no evidence of traders importing elephants to Istanbul for profit. But some such people may have been active nonetheless.

Some elephants known to have arrived in Istanbul were gifts from the Shah of Iran, who maintained close relations with the Mughal rulers of India. The Mughal Emperor Humāyūn (r. 1531–40 and 1555–56) had even spent several years in exile at the court of Shah Tahmāsp. Embassies from India must have occasionally brought elephants to Iran as imperial gifts; and, as noted before, it was not considered impolite to present third parties with items that the donor had previously received as presents.⁷⁹

The story of one of these elephants in the Ottoman context poses problems to which at present we apparently lack any convincing solution. In the famous *Süleymannâme*, a set of illustrated volumes intended to depict the history of the world from its creation to the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent, there is a miniature showing a prisoner taken during the war in Hungary being trampled to death by an elephant.⁸⁰ The scene is set under the walls of Belgrade, the Hungarian border fortress that Sultan

Süleyman conquered in 1521, shortly after having ascended the throne. Two half-naked servitors seated on the back of the animal seem to drive it on, while a – perhaps – dark-skinned man standing aside is apparently in overall charge of the animal. Similarly to his victims, he wears a short caftan, while almost all the Ottoman figures depicted wear garments reaching to their feet. A group of prisoners, without head-coverings, are in the lower right-hand corner of the miniature, awaiting their deaths.

The question is whether this scene is historical, as there does not seem to be any reference to such an event in the Ottoman chronicles covering Süleyman's reign.⁸¹ Furthermore only elephants especially trained for war, or else infuriated beyond all measure and 'going on a rampage' (to use the terminology current in present-day India), can be induced to trample a person to death. Admittedly we know very little about the manner in which the *Süleymannâme's* author Arifi chose the subjects to highlight in his book, or about the decision-making process by which the 'execution-by-elephant' came to be included.⁸² Probably, the miniature was a piece of victory propaganda, a genre not known for its veracity; but on the other hand the number of people with access to the *Süleymannâme* was very small, and it is not obvious why Ottoman courtiers would have wanted to include a purely fictional scene.⁸³

Other references to elephants at the sultans' court come from written sources: in 1531, in other words a decade after the conquest of Belgrade, the ambassadors of Charles V (r. 1517–54/55) saw two elephants while passing through the first court of the Topkapı Palace.⁸⁴ We also possess a miniature from the time of Sultan Osman II (r. 1618–22) depicting two elephants that a Safavid embassy had brought to Istanbul.⁸⁵ The image is part of the *Şehnâme (Book of Kings)* composed by the poet Nadiri for the adolescent ruler; and the two animals form part of a menagerie consisting of what was probably a cheetah carried by two horsemen, some mules and an animal that is hard to identify, but which the painter evidently intended to be a rhinoceros.⁸⁶ The elephants were richly caparisoned, each with a bell suspended from his neck. On the larger animal rode a driver and a person of some distinction seated in a howdah, while the smaller one only carried a driver. Presumably at least one of these two men would have known how to take care of the elephants; for the Ottoman Palace only hired such servitors on an ad hoc basis, who would have needed instruction before starting their work.⁸⁷ Another miniature in the same volume showed an elephant taken along on the Hotin campaign (1621) and ridden by a drummer whose noise was to encourage the sultan's warriors and terrify his opponents.

Presumably gift elephants only survived in Istanbul for a decade or two at most. However, these animals must have arrived with some frequency, as

both Istanbul and Edirne contained places known as elephant shelters (*fil damı*).⁸⁸ Referring to the mid 1600s, Evliya reported that the animals ‘sent by the monarch of Hindustan’ were kept in a ruined public bath. Thus by this time, the Ottoman Palace received its elephants by a direct route, and not necessarily by way of Iran. Among travellers from Latinate Europe who visited Istanbul in the later 1500s, the menagerie of the sultans was a ‘must see’, to the point that a few stereotypical references, copied and recopied, featured in many travelogues. Evliya Çelebi was impressed as well: for he recorded that in the small public bath of the village of Kanlıca on the Bosphorus in – or on – the water basin there was a marble image of an elephant that to the author seemed almost to be alive.⁸⁹ As Evliya did not record any details, we do not know whether the image was a piece of Ottoman artwork or a remnant of some antique statuary.

Other elephant images were definitely of Ottoman workmanship: both Evliya and the miniatures of Abdülcélil Levni celebrating the circumcision of the sons of Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) in 1720 record creatures that could not have been live animals. Evliya described a variety of animal simulacra including elephants ignited for a festival; when the fireworks attached to these contraptions had exploded, the humans hidden inside jumped out, ‘attacked’ the townspeople and caused them to flee in terror.⁹⁰ As for Levni’s depictions, the text of the ‘festival book’ he was to illustrate informed us that they were not ‘real’ elephants, but contraptions decorated with fireworks.⁹¹

We may wonder about the meaning of these displays, apart from showing that even the powerful ruler of Hindustan thought it well-advised to gain the goodwill of the Ottoman sultan. Presumably the court in Istanbul was interested in elephants because its officials shared a Eurasian monarchical culture, according to which exotic and large animals, being difficult to control, symbolized the ruler’s power. In seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Istanbul, this power was made visible in rather a peculiar fashion. As Evliya recounted, images of wild animals, including elephants, were paraded so as to strike terror in the bystanders. But at the end of the performance, when the fireworks placed in them exploded, the creatures turned out to be artificial: all’s well that ends well. Perhaps the sultan’s subjects were to understand that the power and vigilance of their ruler protected them not only against human enemies, but also kept wild beasts at bay.

(PLATE 5) THE ‘CHINESE COFFEE’ CONNECTION

Before the eighteenth century, no true porcelain was produced outside of East Asia; apart from the colourful Japanese *imari* and its Chinese

counterparts, much of the ware exported to the Middle East was blue-and-white. This colour combination had resulted from the joint efforts and ingenuity of Chinese and Middle Eastern potters. While white faience – and at a later date – porcelain were the inventions of Chinese craftsmen, adding ornaments in blue was an original idea of mediaeval Middle Eastern potters, which Chinese manufacturers soon adopted.⁹² Conforming to that tradition, much of Ottoman faience also featured blue-and-white designs; among other Chinese-inspired motifs, local patrons favoured bands vaguely resembling clouds ('Chinese cloud design'), in addition to peonies and scalloped rims.

Especially for drinking coffee, wealthy Ottoman subjects often used receptacles imported from China. As coffee was not popular in East Asia before the 1900s, in their country of origin these cups must have served for other beverages, unless specifically made for export; for the porcelain workshops of Jingdezhen, where most of these items originated, had from early times been export-oriented. Subjects of the sultans might also turn to imitations in İznik or Kütahya faience (see Chapter 6). Cups of both Chinese and local manufacture, which at first did not have handles and were placed in special metal holders (*zarf*), have been found all over the sultans' former territories.⁹³

We may hypothesize that Muslim merchants from the Indian subcontinent (including modern Pakistan and Bangladesh) had conveyed these cups at least part of the way; but as noted, to date no evidence has emerged concerning the routes that this porcelain travelled before its arrival in Jeddah or Suez. Presumably it was Indian ships, often very large, which brought both pilgrims and porcelain from South Asia to Mecca. Therefore the porcelain must have changed hands, perhaps even more than once, in a port of southern India. Possibly the Philippines also were a way station; but given the lack of written documentation, we will have to await further research on ships that sank while engaged in the porcelain trade to the Middle East.⁹⁴

At least we know that during the 1500s and 1600s, coffee cups were arriving in the northern Red Sea, as the Japanese archaeologist Kawatoko Mutsuo has found many broken pieces on the shores of the Sinai Peninsula.⁹⁵ Merchants needed to transfer their porcelain from ships to the backs of camels, before continuing to Cairo or Alexandria. On this occasion, they must have thrown out the broken items. In addition the mid-eighteenth-century ship that went down near the Egyptian island of Sadana also carried large quantities of coffee cups of Chinese manufacture.⁹⁶ Further south, the Sharifs of Mecca already in the later 1500s had access to porcelain – and probably to Iranian imitations in faience.⁹⁷

Our knowledge of how cups from China spread after their arrival in the Ottoman world is also quite fragmentary. But at least we know where they arrived, found users, and finally came to grief – even if Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu in her ground-breaking study has pointed out that in the 1600s, the quantities of shards at issue were still quite small.⁹⁸ By contrast, we have seen that Julian Raby is of the opinion that in Istanbul, so many shards of Chinese porcelain have emerged that these imports may well have contributed to the decline of the İznik faience manufactures after about 1600.⁹⁹ In all probability, most of the breakage in downtown Istanbul did not concern great plates and chargers of the kind collected in the Ottoman Palace, but far more modest items like rose water sprinklers and – above all – coffee cups. As for the provinces: a shop in seventeenth-century Ankara offered customers so-called *Kâbe fincanı*, or cups from Mecca. Probably the item had been brought to Ankara by a pilgrim, who may well have sold a couple of these small but elegant pieces to balance his budget after the long and expensive trip to the Hejaz. For after having completed the hajj, many pilgrims attended a fair near Mecca where buying and selling of all manner of goods was tax-free; most probably Chinese porcelain was traded here as well.¹⁰⁰ Hungarian archaeologists, who have examined many large and small Ottoman forts, have also discovered some broken cups of Chinese porcelain; probably it was the higher echelons of the army who enjoyed these items and used them to show off their superior status.¹⁰¹

Manufacturers of good-quality faience cups in the Ottoman lands often used Chinese export porcelain as models. However, Chinese pieces destined for the sultans' territories contained motifs that the merchants involved in this trade knew to be readily marketable in an Islamic context. Thus the pieces that Ottoman artisans got to see may well have been quite different from those destined for consumers in China. Chinese porcelain, for example, sometimes sported inscriptions in Arabic including quotations from the Qu'ran, as was common in upmarket items made in the Islamic world.¹⁰² These interconnections are all the more remarkable as there is so little evidence of direct contact between Jingdezhen on the one hand and Istanbul or Cairo on the other.¹⁰³

(PLATE 6) TWO PISTOLS AS INCOMPLETE OTTOMANS

Between 1787 and 1791, the Ottomans and the Habsburgs fought their last war of the eighteenth century; and, as so often happened, the Austrian dynasty could count on the cooperation of noblemen from within and outside the imperial territories. One such person was Prince Friedrich Josias von Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld (1737–1815), who although from a traditionally Lutheran family commanded the emperor's forces in the

battle of Martinesti on the River Rymnik in Wallachia in 1789 (see also Chapter 5), the overall commander of the allied forces being the Russian general Alexander Vasilyevich Suvorov (1730–1800). Presumably some of the pieces today in the museum of Veste Coburg, in the little town of Coburg on the northern edge of Bavaria, had been part of the booty, which included the tent of the current grand vizier. Certainly, the pistols shown here must have once belonged to an elite Ottoman gentleman. But no details seem to be extant.¹⁰⁴

According to the explanations provided by the curators, the two pistols were probably made in Latinate Europe sometime in the 1700s, and at a time that remains unknown, found a new owner in Istanbul. These pieces could have arrived as a diplomatic gift, a purchase or else a piece of booty. The unknown Ottoman owner had the pistols decorated in a workshop probably located in the capital. Given these unresolved questions, there is no way of finding out who took the pistols to the battlefield of Martinesti and how exactly Prince Josias acquired them.

However, at least we know that arms, when passing from Latinate Europe to the Ottoman world or vice versa, were quite often refurbished. Researchers working in Saxony's museums, where a large collection of Ottoman arms has been studied and published during the last 20 years, have pointed out that weapons were quite often composites. European owners might have an Ottoman firearm adjusted so that they could use it without difficulty; for they regarded damascening and inlaid work, with which elegant arms in the sultans' domains were often decorated, as something very special.¹⁰⁵ We may assume that an elite owner with perhaps a special interest in pistols decided to make these weapons more serviceable by having them redecorated in an Ottoman style.¹⁰⁶ We need to find out much more about such matters.

Conclusion

In the present chapter, we have introduced a collection of diverse artefacts that survive due to recycling for a variety of purposes. The Roman gravestone in Ankara was probably close at hand when the mosque was being built, and the builders reused it simply for that reason. Matters were quite different where depictions of the Kaaba were at issue. This structure went back to pre-Islamic times, had been rededicated by the Prophet in person and, after the latter's death, had been reconstructed during the early years of the Islamic community. This holy site was thus both Arab and Islamic; yet most of the tile panels showing the Meccan sanctuary are Ottoman and date to the 1600s and 1700s. Surely this circumstance was not due to chance; for in the late 1500s and early 1600s, Ottoman sultans

and especially Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) had major repair work done on this site; and in the 1630s, after the ancient structure had finally collapsed in a rainstorm, an Egyptian Mamlūk had the building reconstructed, carefully reusing the old stones. So a panel depicting the Kaaba reminded Istanbul or Cairo Muslims of one of the principal religious commands of Islam, and perhaps consoled those who would never have the wherewithal to complete the journey.

In addition, those denizens of the major Ottoman cities who had heard about the sultans' restorations – and they must have been quite numerous, given the publicity surrounding the pilgrimage caravan – would have realized that the good condition of the holiest site in the Islamic world was due to the efforts of their rulers, who had thereby fulfilled their obligations as protectors of the pilgrimage. Thus the artists who produced the panels and the patrons, often quite modest, who financed them, in turn appropriated an image of the Kaaba, which had been refurbished and thus re-appropriated and 'Ottomanized' by the sultans. This was obviously a more important and more complex case of reuse than re-employing quite ordinary stones collected from a Roman site.

As for the use of Iranian models for palace-quality carpets, high-level members of the Ottoman elites in the 1500s apparently were very much impressed by Timurid and post-Timurid, in other words Safavid, artwork. While Ottomans and Safavids were frequently at war during this period, and in the eyes of the sultans' servitors, their opponents were heretics whose very quality as Muslims was doubtful, carpets and miniatures continued to enjoy profound esteem. On the other hand, the high reputation of Iranian art did not mean that every feature was copied; before the 1800s, inscriptions on carpets whether pious or secular were much less widespread in Istanbul than they were in Iran; and patrons and designers never imitated the depictions of people and animals that ornamented textiles during the earlier phases of Safavid rule. Perhaps we might class this feature as 'selective appropriation', conditioned by political and religious considerations.

Ottoman users of Chinese porcelain received some of their goods through Iranian intermediaries, but most of the – quite popular – coffee cups apparently arrived by way of the Hejaz and Egypt. We do not know how many consumers from the central Ottoman lands were aware of the origin of these cups; perhaps the fact that they sometimes arrived as pilgrimage mementoes may have induced poorly informed customers to believe that they had originated in the Hejaz. But at present we know very little about non-elite perceptions; and while the Ottoman Palace collected large quantities of Chinese porcelain, we often cannot tell which pieces were most highly prized, and whether there were perhaps people in the

palace who appreciated them more – or less – than others.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore it is worth considering that the Chinese did not drink coffee during the period under discussion, so that Ottoman subjects using imported cups for this purpose had reinterpreted these exotic items.

We have consciously downplayed the role of European artefacts; but especially when it came to weaponry, the Ottoman military had no compunction about adopting whatever innovations seemed useful, whether from Europe or elsewhere. Recent research has, moreover, emphasized the continuing military strength of the Ottomans until the mid 1700s, in spite of the single debacle before Vienna and the subsequent loss of Hungary (1683–99); only the war with Russia in 1768–74 profoundly changed this situation.¹⁰⁸ In the Ottoman Palace, it was not customary to exhibit captured arms and flags, although the collection of foreign helmets in Istanbul's Military Museum indicates that some members of the elite did preserve pieces from Latinate Europe and Iran. Thus many captured weapons must have been recast, while the flags perhaps served some mundane purpose or other before they were finally thrown out. On the other hand, luxury weapons might change hands as gifts, especially between gentlemen of both sides encountering one another in the borderlands; but in the 1570s even a cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church received a gift of Ottoman bow and arrows from a group of the sultan's naval officers captured at the battle of Lepanto.¹⁰⁹ Perhaps the pistols introduced here had a similar history.

As noted, the Ottoman Palace played a central role in the reworking and recycling of all sorts of goods, even of those also accessible to elite users outside the sultans' entourage. We will therefore continue our story by discussing a specific example of such mediation, namely portraits of Ottoman sultans. After all, portraits were a means through which these rulers made an appearance before their subjects, particularly those belonging to the palace elite. As art historians have studied this topic in depth, our discussion will only provide a short summary, focusing on the monarchs rather than on the elite whose belongings are the chief subject of this study.¹¹⁰ But when discussing a strongly hierarchical society, it makes sense to start from the very top.

CHAPTER 2

THE OTTOMAN SULTAN: VICTORIOUS AND PIOUS

Throughout Ottoman history, the governing elite always assumed that the sultan was without dispute the ruler of his empire. Yet the latter owed his position not to any personal charisma – although some sultans certainly possessed this quality – but to his physical descent from an unbroken line of previous rulers. From the seventeenth century onward, an individual monarch could be – and was – quite frequently deposed; but only another member of the Ottoman dynasty could take his place. For it was the dynasty in its entirety that, according to Mustafa Âlî (1541–1600), enjoyed special God-given blessings including protection from heresy and from the plague epidemics which often decimated the people of Istanbul.¹ Apart from continuity over the generations, what counted was the support of ‘seventy-seven saints’, as Evliya Çelebi (1611–after 1683) was to assure his readers a few decades later.² However, unlike their rivals the Safavid shahs of Iran, the sultans never claimed descent from the Prophet Muhammad; and, if the stories about the dynasty’s early history reported by Evliya Çelebi reflect the beliefs of educated people during the mid 1600s, Ertoğrul Beğ and his son Osman Gazi (d. c. 1326), the eponymous founder of the ruling house, had been petty dynasts who only gained the title of *beğ* (lord) during the terminal decline of the Seljuk sultanate.

Given support from ‘seventy-seven saints’, Evliya propounded that the ruling family enjoyed heavenly protection; for the early sultans had surrounded themselves with dervishes who encouraged and blessed their campaigns.³ After the conquest of Egypt and Syria in 1516–17, the Ottoman sultans claimed religious status as protectors of the pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the basic obligations of every Muslim with the necessary means (see Chapter 1). Further religious prestige was connected to the sultans’ piety and support of Sunni right belief, to say nothing of the

munificence involved in building mosques, schools and public kitchens, from which the Muslim community drew benefit.

Descent and piety apart, an Ottoman ruler needed to appear as a conqueror first and foremost, his defeated opponents being non-Muslims or else Shi'ite 'heretics'. In the fifteenth century, the sultans confronted both Orthodox and Catholic Christians, conquering what was left of the Byzantine Empire and gradually driving the Venetians out of the eastern Mediterranean. After the fall of Byzantium, the only remaining Orthodox rulers that were fully independent were the grand princes of Muscovy, who in the late sixteenth century became the tsars of Russia. But in spite of intermittent earlier warfare, it was mainly in the 1700s that the Ottoman elite began to conceive this newly mobilizing empire as a major threat.

By the early 1500s, the sultans had conquered the small and often unstable principalities of the Balkan Peninsula; after 1526, the defeat and death of Lajos II of Hungary resulted in the partition of his realm. While possessing greater military potential than the Balkan principalities, this kingdom found resistance to the Ottomans quite difficult because of feudal decentralization and factional disputes among the nobility. Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520–66) and his successors in the 1500s and 1600s carried the war further into central Europe, besieging Vienna twice, in 1529 and 1683. A further campaign (1532) apparently should have led to yet another siege, which failed to materialize.⁴

From the Ottoman viewpoint, it was a piece of bad luck that the alliance between the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs held up throughout the 1500s and 1600s, so that the latter were more than just the 'kings of Beç (Vienna)' as Ottoman office-holders of the 1500s liked to call them. Given frequent alliances of the Habsburgs with the popes in Rome, a city that like Vienna featured in Ottoman political image-making as an enticing goal for future conquest (*kızıl elma* or 'red apple'), by the sixteenth century it was the Catholic world that featured as the principal enemy of the Ottoman rulers.⁵ The resulting hostility was only tempered by the fact that the king of France, an enemy of the Habsburgs and intermittent ally of the sultan, was also a committed Catholic.

In addition Iran, from the time of Shah Ismā'īl I (r. 1501–24), was a major opponent; while the sultans emphasized their Sunni identity, the first Shah of the Safavid dynasty made a version of Shi'ism, as interpreted by the largely nomadic and semi-nomadic population of Anatolia and western Iran, into the state religion of his new polity. Some religious scholars of both sides, especially in wartime, declared that the respective heresies of 'the other side' were so damnable that their adherents could no longer be regarded as Muslims in the full sense of the word.⁶ This form of

vilification had practical consequences, as the subjects of a Muslim ruler could not be enslaved regardless of religion; however, these guarantees did not operate in the case of a non-Muslim ruler. Therefore prisoners of war in Ottoman–Safavid confrontations could never be certain of their fate.

A regional power on the edge of the Islamic world

We will begin our discussion of sultanic image-making by taking a look at the manner in which Ottoman monarchs presented their status as Sunni Muslim rulers, keeping in mind that self-images changed in the course of time. The fifteenth century began with a major crisis, caused by Timur's (Tamerlane's) defeat of Bayezid I (r. 1389–1402) and the subsequent war between the sultan's four sons for the now vacant throne. After a struggle of over a decade, Mehmed I (r. 1413–21) managed to defeat his brothers and begin reconquering the Anatolian principalities that Timur had re-established after their earlier destruction by Bayezid I. Sultan Mehmed's successor Murad II (r. 1421–51, with interruptions) continued these conquests.⁷ Thus, despite setbacks, Bayezid I, Mehmed I and Murad II ruled an empire which was vigorously expanding both in the Balkans and in western and central Anatolia. The town of Bursa, not far from the Sea of Marmara and conquered in 1326, served as the first capital, where the sultans built a palace and the members of their harems used to live. However, the rulers were frequently absent, hunting or on campaign, so that the North African traveller Ibn Battūta (1304–1368/9) when visiting İznik was received not by Orhan Beğ (r. 1324–62) but by one of the latter's wives, whom he called Bīlūn/Baylun Hatun.⁸

Viewed from the centres of the Islamic world, such as Cairo or the Mongol capitals of Tabriz and Samarkand, this new empire, however dynamic, was still situated on the margins of the Islamic world.⁹ Legal and religious scholars of the first rank thus might prefer to study and teach in Cairo.¹⁰ After conquering Constantinople in 1453, Mehmed the Conqueror (r. 1451–81) made considerable efforts to convert Istanbul into a centre of Islamic learning, inviting scholars and literary men from the central lands of the Muslim world to settle in Istanbul. Presumably the internecine strife among Timur's descendants after the death of Shāhrokh (r. 1405–47) made it possible for Mehmed II to acquire the astronomer 'Alī Kuşci (1403–74), an important scholar from what we might call 'the Timurid inheritance'. 'Alī Kuşci taught in the newly founded theological-cum-legal college (*medrese*) attached to the Aya Sofya mosque, only a few years earlier the principal Byzantine church.

After 1453, sultanic patronage seems to have expanded: Mehmed II not only collected books from the Islamic world, but also the works of certain

major authors of classical antiquity. Thus beyond purely pious ends, promotion of the fine arts and certain sciences now formed a significant component of the sultans' legitimization strategy.

Of the three palaces built by Mehmed II, one was located in Edirne, while the Old and New Palaces (Eski Saray and Yeni Saray, the latter now known as the Topkapı Sarayı) were both in Istanbul, which over time the sultan made into his capital. Apparently this move aroused opposition presumably from the warlords intent on making conquests in the Balkans under minimal supervision by the sultan; for these people, Edirne, being the staging post for Balkan campaigns, remained the capital of choice. However, this opposition, which involved vilification of Constantinople/Istanbul as a site of unbelief duly punished by the deity, only found its way into the surviving literature after the death of Mehmed II, in 1481.¹¹

Governing a world power and promoting Sunni right belief

In this novel setting, the monarch and his successors, especially Kanuni Süleyman/Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–66) soon developed an elaborate courtly ritual which by the last quarter of the sixteenth century, demanded that the sultan be nearly silent in public. Respect also demanded that he should be served in silence, a feat all the more noteworthy as especially in the seventeenth century some sultans and their attendants were quite young, often mere teenagers. Foreign ambassadors who only saw the public face of the sultanate frequently commented on the awed silence in the second court of the Topkapı Palace, even when large numbers of janissaries had assembled to receive their pay.¹² However, Evliya Çelebi has reassured the modern reader by telling stories about the horseplay that Murad IV (r. 1623–40) and his pages engaged in when invisible to outsiders; after all, the sultan was an adolescent during much of his reign.¹³

Furthermore the early Ottoman sultans had often encouraged dervishes who sometimes were Sunni Muslims and sometimes rather not; but from about 1500, the monarchs and their elites considered that 'following the right path' as laid out by Sunni scholars was a condition *sine qua non* for acceptability in the halls of the Topkapı Sarayı. Encounters with Islamic scholars thus formed a major part of the palace agenda. Ceremonial surrounding the death and burial of a sultan also changed accordingly: thus at the funeral of Mehmed the Conqueror in 1481, members of the ruling elite wore mourning clothes in black, dark blue or purple. As for Mehmed II, when learning that his son Mustafa was dead, apparently he placed dust on his head and otherwise visibly demonstrated his grief. Complying with the rules of Islamic piety and decorum, these

manifestations had been toned down considerably by the later 1500s; however, when depicting the funeral of Süleyman the Magnificent, who had died under the walls of Szigetvár, the relevant miniature still showed the grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa weeping, admittedly in the relative privacy of his tent.¹⁴ However, by the early 1600s, these public manifestations of grief were viewed as unsuitable, as the pious were supposed to accept God's decisions without demur; and by this time, the dead body of a sultan had come to be treated just like the body of any deceased Muslim of good standing.

Sunni right belief and decorum thus dominated life in the Ottoman Palace, and the reverential silence surrounding the sultan meant that the latter found it more difficult to directly run political affairs. By the seventeenth century, this limitation of the sultan's freedom of action made political sense in the eyes of the elite, as viziers and palace officials, including eunuchs but also the mothers of reigning sultans, had taken on an active role. On a lower level, janissaries and even temporarily hired mercenaries also came to have a say in Istanbul politics at least upon occasion; taken together these changes were so dramatic that the polity emerging around 1600 has been described as 'the second Ottoman Empire'.¹⁵ In the patronage of art as well, this broadening of the power elite and retreat of the sultan had visible consequences: for in the late 1500s and early 1600s, a sizeable number of elite figures sponsored elaborately illustrated historical and literary manuscripts.¹⁶ Given this new power structure, the polity could continue even though the sultan was almost unapproachable: he still served as the cornerstone of the Ottoman edifice although the viziers could only speak to him once he had emerged from the harem, his official residence from the late 1500s onward.¹⁷

The 'second Ottoman Empire'

In the 1600s and 1700s, some sultans seem to have found palace etiquette quite stifling, though apparently unavoidable as long as they remained in the Topkapı Sarayı. In consequence, some of them escaped to Edirne and the royal hunt, or later, once a military-cum-artisan rebellion had forced Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) to permanently return to Istanbul, to newly built summer palaces and villas on the Bosphorus. In the 1600s, Osman II (r. 1618–22) and Murad IV (r. 1623–40) in particular attempted to revitalize the sultanic image of a conquering hero; later on Mehmed IV (r. 1654–87) accompanied a victorious campaign against Poland, although he was not the actual commander. Yet participation did procure him considerable legitimacy, which he, however, lost again when the

1683 campaign against Vienna ended in failure. Already in 1687 the war had turned into a military disaster, although the loss of Hungary was not final until 1699. Nor was Mustafa II (r. 1695–1703) more successful in his own campaign to re-establish the sultan as a military hero, fighting against the Habsburgs; and as his good fortune (*devlet*) had apparently deserted him, his opponents found it easy to depose him in 1703, just a few years after the treaty of Karlowitz/Karlofça.¹⁸

Beginning in the 1700s, Ottoman sultans thus no longer took the field in person; their viziers may have considered that the outcome of a battle was now impossible to foresee, and the presence of a sultan at a defeat could only be a delegitimizing factor. However, the palace continued to order material goods glorifying the sultan's warlike qualities: in the Topkapı Palace Museum, there survives a set of armour that apparently belonged to Mustafa III (r. 1757–74), a veritable piece of jewellery.¹⁹

During the 1600s, the sultans' palace lost its previously major role as a training ground for the military-administrative elite. At the same time both in Istanbul and in the provinces there had emerged a variety of grandees, after 1695 strengthened by their hold over lifetime tax farms (*malikâne*).²⁰ These men set up households of their own and promoted young men trained in them as candidates for official positions.²¹ In the eighteenth century, these magnates came to be the real power in the land, who might decide to support a given sultan but also to oppose him; and certain Mamlūk emirs in Egypt or the 'Muslim Bonaparte' Ali Paşa of Yanya/Janina tried to become autonomous and perhaps independent rulers, sometimes using their diplomatic contacts to European powers for this purpose.²²

Sultanic autocracy 'in a new key'

Somewhat later, Mehmed Ali Paşa/Muhammad Ali (1769–1849), originally an Albanian mercenary commander from Kavala (today in Greece) also tried to dominate the sultanate; and it was only with Russian aid that Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) was able to prevent Mehmed Ali Paşa's son İbrahim Paşa from marching to Istanbul and becoming the de facto power behind the throne.

During the early reign of Mahmud II, the sultan had thus lost most of his decision-making power. But this monarch managed to recentralize government and once again place his own person at the centre of affairs. We still do not possess a study explaining how exactly he achieved this purpose, in the brief 18 years between his enthronement in 1808 and the momentous year of 1826, when he defeated and abolished the janissaries. To re-establish central control, the sultan needed to deprive

local magnates of their political power, sometimes by reducing them to the status of landholding gentry without major political ambitions and in other cases by having these men defeated and killed in outright campaigns. In particular it is unclear how Mahmud II managed to find the resources needed for this enterprise, at a time when the uprising in Greece (from 1821) drained money and manpower.

Once the janissaries no longer existed, the sultan's government was ready to fill the political vacuum that they had left, controlling artisans and pious foundations in a manner difficult to envisage during the 1600s or 1700s. This major change also involved a different public image of the sultan, and we will conclude this chapter by discussing the manner in which Mahmud II now presented himself as an absolute monarch resembling contemporary European autocrats.

(PLATE 7) AN 'INVISIBLE' HELMET, REPRESENTING
THE DOMINANCE OF SULTAN SÜLEYMAN

This helmet is 'invisible' because it disappeared after few years of existence; and even to interested denizens of the sixteenth century, it was mainly accessible through two contemporary woodcuts and one engraving, all from Italy. In addition there survives an original drawing with some slight colour added; but this item was only visible to a very few viewers, including courtiers of the duke of Bavaria. Probably, the helmet had been created for Sultan Süleyman's campaign of 1532; and it was melted down at an unknown date, but in all likelihood not long afterward.

Three important studies have shown that this headdress, in spite of its phantasmagorical appearance, had at one time existed as a piece of metalwork and was not a creature of some Renaissance artist's 'orientalist' imagination.²³ Moreover, manufacture and financing were not merely speculations by some Venetian merchants out for a profit, although this factor was certainly significant. Politics were at issue as well: for İbrahim Paşa, Sultan Süleyman's grand vizier and – for a while – alter ego was involved in the ordering of the helmet, and so was İskender Çelebi, a powerful finance director who must have procured the money for this extravagant piece of imperial representation.²⁴ As the drawings sent to the armourers and jewellers involved have been subjected to careful analysis, the appearance of the helmet and the decorative repertoire that went into its ornamentation are now reasonably well known.²⁵

To the unwary viewer, the helmet might have resembled an ensemble of crowns piled one above the other, forming an exaggerated version of a papal tiara; for while the tiara features three crowns, the helmet had four, surmounted by an aigrette made of an enormous bunch of feathers. Due to

its height, the depiction of the helmet did not fit into the conventional format of a woodcut; and the artist responsible for this picture drastically truncated it. As for the artist who made the engraving, probably Giovanni Britto, he glued together two sheets of paper and thus gained the necessary space. Given this ostentation, a Habsburg envoy that saw the helmet publicly displayed in 1532, and did not know that Muslim rulers did not wear crowns, believed that he had seen the imperial crown of the Ottoman dynasty.²⁶

Sultan Süleyman did not use this helmet in a purely Ottoman context; rather it was shown to the Habsburg ambassador and also paraded through Belgrade when Süleyman made his solemn entry into this fortified place, conquered only about a decade earlier (1521). Even though clearly a helmet and not a crown, court officials probably regarded these royal insignia as somewhat outlandish. Apparently the sultan wanted to demonstrate through this display of gold and jewellery that he outranked the Habsburg 'king of Vienna' and even the Pope.

But the dispute went beyond 'ordinary' politics: for in the early period of Süleyman's reign, the young monarch permitted some members of his entourage to claim that he was the *Mehdi*, a just and universal monarch who would rule the world prior to the second coming of Jesus, an event that in turn would usher in the Last Judgement. Interestingly courtiers of Süleyman's rival Charles V (r. 1517–54/55) made parallel claims for the young Habsburg emperor. In this context, the sultan and his entourage particularly expected to conquer the city of Rome, perhaps in a final campaign that would succeed where two previous attempts had failed. When talking to the Venetian ambassador (*bailo*) in 1526, Sultan Süleyman's grand vizier İbrahim Paşa in fact referred to a prophecy making a claim of this kind; as a result of the sultan's apocalyptic victory, there would be only a single religion in the world – namely Islam.

However, prophecies of a very similar kind, including predictions of an Ottoman victory, also circulated in Latinate Europe and especially in Venice; but usually the authors of these texts had the sultan convert to Christianity in the end, and rule the world, together with an 'angel-like' Pope.²⁷ Presumably these texts gained currency as a response to the violence, factionalism and corruption that had plagued the Catholic hierarchy and particularly the popes since the fourteenth century at least.²⁸

While İbrahim Paşa with his close contacts to Venice must have been aware of these 'Western' prophecies, personages like Mevlana İsa and especially 'Haydar the geomancer' (*remmal*) represented the Islamic version of apocalyptic imagery.²⁹ In his versified chronicle, Mevlana İsa responded to the miseries suffered by Anatolia's inhabitants due to both natural and man-made causes, by pointing to the eschatological implications of

Süleyman's victories. While the author did not claim that taxes would disappear even in the fortunate time preceding the Last Judgement, people troubled by this matter could take comfort in his assurance that they would have to pay only long-established dues and not the more recently instituted exactions. Mevlana İsa clearly knew about the Sacco di Roma, the spoliation of Rome by the soldiers of Charles V (1527); but he believed that the city would soon recover and once again fill with gold that would then become the booty of the Mehdi and his Muslim soldiers.³⁰

Mevlana İsa wrote after 1532, but before the death of İbrahim Paşa in early 1536. He had been a partisan or at least sympathizer of the grand vizier; and, as he used simple Turkish, he probably aimed at a non-elite audience. But in the Topkapı Sarayı as well, there were people who took prophecies seriously; and it was perhaps not fortuitous that Haydar *remmal*, coming originally from the court of Shah Ismā'īl I of Iran (r. 1500–24), first appeared in the Ottoman Palace in 1535, a few months before İbrahim Paşa's death. This new authority on the world of the occult claimed that Süleyman would be the ruler of the world, and also the apex of the hierarchy of saints recognized by many Islamic mystics: the outcome of this prognostication was similar to the 'Western' type, as the sultan's just rule would be the beginning of a process culminating in the Last Judgement.³¹ However, as Sultan Süleyman grew older, his belief in his future role as world conqueror apparently declined; while Haydar *remmal* remained at court, his later writings concerned more mundane questions such as the activities of Princes Mustafa and Bayezid, later defeated in the struggle for the throne against their brother Selim (Selim II, r. 1566–74). In these later writings, eschatology presumably had no part to play.

Thus the jewelled helmet ordered by İbrahim Paşa probably not only advertised Süleyman's wealth and power, but also his status as a ruler who would achieve the universal monarchy also claimed by Charles V, as well as the spiritual authority of the Pope. A person accustomed to read visual messages would have seen the helmet as a symbol of worldly rule, and as noted, the four crowns attached to it would have signified Süleyman's superiority to the Pope. Or if the Sultan and his entourage appreciated the prophecy by which a former associate of Prince Cem (1459–95) tried to curry favour under Sultan Süleyman, the helmet may have meant that the Ottoman monarch intended to take the place of the current Pope, who, along with most of his dignitaries, was to perish during the sultan's conquest of Rome.³² In that sense, the helmet may have signified Süleyman's role at the end of time; and if we carry speculation a bit further, its destruction may also have meant that the monarch was beginning to doubt the eschatological role which Mevlana İsa and Haydar *remmal* were assigning to him.

(PLATE 8) THE SULTAN PORTRAYED: PROPAGATING THE GLORY
OF THE OTTOMAN DYNASTY

Mehmed II the Conqueror was the first Ottoman sultan whose physical appearance is on record in contemporary portraits, the best-known example being the work of Gentile Bellini (1429–1507), a Venetian painter of reputation and brother to the even more famous Giovanni Bellini (c. 1430–1516). Gentile Bellini did visit the sultan's court and returned home with high honours.³³ Unfortunately the extant portrait has been over-painted so badly in the nineteenth century that the attribution is now uncertain. Several Ottoman subjects probably studied with Bellini while he was in Istanbul. Thus Şiblizâde Ahmed Bey, or perhaps a painter named Sinan, produced an image of the monarch smelling a rose that was to attract the attention of the court painter Nakkaş Osman, who copied it into his *Şemâ'ilnâme*; in Ottoman perception, this image became the 'standard' portrait of Mehmed the Conqueror.³⁴ In addition, there are several medals showing the young and later the middle-aged sultan by other Italian artists, including Costanzo da Ferrara.³⁵

Possibly these pictures have some connection to the sultan's plans of conquering parts of Italy or even the city of Rome, a project aborted by his death in 1481. Only in the early years of Sultan Süleyman, as noted, did a possible invasion of Italian territories reappear on the sultan's agenda; and the hopes of the Ottoman elite for such a conquest probably resulted in the commissioning of several portraits of Sultan Süleyman, both by Ottoman and by Italian artists. Perhaps from the Ottoman perspective, these images were to familiarize the well-to-do and educated among the sultan's potential subjects in Latinate Europe with the appearance of their future sovereign. Beyond such practical considerations, certain Ottoman dignitaries, especially the powerful grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa (about 1506–79), were interested in obtaining the sultans' likenesses, including those of long dead rulers that had flourished in the 1300s and early 1400s.³⁶

Yet, as we have seen, no such portraits had ever been made before the age of Mehmed II. However, this fact did not prevent an Ottoman court artist from claiming an authentic source even for the images of the very first Ottoman Sultans Osman I and Orhan Gazi.³⁷ Presumably the patrons' concern was with the construction of a dignified image of the Ottoman dynasty, which in the late 1500s already had been on the throne for about three centuries and thus outlasted most royal lineages in the Islamic world, to say nothing of the Byzantine Empire or Latinate Europe. Whenever possible, artists and patrons aimed at physical resemblance to the original; but this was not a condition *sine qua non*. For Ottoman artists and intellectuals of the 1500s, the nobility of the

sultans needed to be rendered visible from their outward appearance; for in their mode of thinking, the features of a person were trustworthy indicators of his character.³⁸

Given the numerous Renaissance painters who produced portraits, Ottoman dignitaries on the lookout for depictions of their sultans were much interested in the relevant Italian series. One of the most famous collections of sultans' portraits was due to the sponsorship of Paolo Giovio (1483–1552), a scholarly bishop who was an aficionado of 'writing the history of his own time'; for this project, he felt that suitable illustrations were essential. While the Giovio series does not survive in the original, a set of prints had already appeared in Basel in 1578; and other painters copied and recopied these portraits in oil.³⁹ Giovio is of interest in our context because in his native town of Como, he put together an early museum showing images of important people of his own time and also of past ages, the Ottoman sultans forming part of this distinguished gallery. Archduke Ferdinand of Habsburg (1529–95), whose collections of Ottoman artefacts will recur throughout this book, put together a similar series in his château of Ambras near Innsbruck.⁴⁰ This same collector also assembled a museum-like collection of arms and armour that had belonged to people whom the collector regarded as heroic, including Sultan Süleyman and Sokollu Mehmed Paşa (see Chapter 5). Incidentally the grand vizier Sokollu ordered a series of sultans' portraits from Venice, perhaps by a follower of Veronese, some of which have survived in Istanbul.⁴¹

In the second half of the sixteenth century, depictions of Ottoman sultans typically formed part of illustrated world histories which began with Adam, a prophet according to Islamic understanding, highlighted the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, and ultimately showed the sequence of Ottoman sultans as rulers blessed by divine grace. Until and including the reign of Murad III (r. 1574–95), extensive – and expensive – manuscripts of this sort were produced for the Ottoman court, presumably in workshops located within or near the sultans' palace. However, in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, artists working in Baghdad began to produce short, relatively cheap but also illustrated genealogies of sultans known as *silsilenâmes* that they apparently had intended for a larger market. Certain provincial governors with the necessary means, for instance Sokollu Hasan Paşa who officiated in Baghdad for some time, sponsored this type of artwork as well.⁴²

In addition the portraits of certain sultans also became available as individual sheets, which the owner might assemble in an album. As people could buy these images one by one, commissioning decorative frames whenever money was available, these albums permitted dignitaries of relatively limited means to share in the pleasure of collecting. A manuscript

today in the Badische Landesbibliothek (State Library of Baden, Germany) contains both a *silsilenâme* perhaps made for Sokollu Hasan Paşa and a couple of calligraphic works, in addition to a picture of Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603) enthroned. The art historians Julian Raby, Gülru Necipoğlu, Filiz Çağman and Serpil Bağcı have pointed out that the painter Nakkaş Osman had introduced a novel format showing the sultan seated on a throne, rather than cross-legged on a cushion as sovereigns had been depicted earlier on, to distinguish them from lesser mortals who were required to kneel.⁴³ The anonymous painter of the miniature showing Mehmed III has placed his subject on a throne – perhaps as an afterthought: for the latter almost appears as if the painter had added it on while the figure of the sultan was already in place. While Raby, Necipoğlu, Çağman and Bağcı consider the miniature of Mehmed III on his throne much inferior to the depiction of the same person in the *silsilenâme*, Hans Georg Majer by contrast has expressed his profound admiration for just this image.⁴⁴

Be that as it may, Mehmed III had a highly accomplished painter in his service known as Nakkaş Hasan (Hasan the painter). After a successful palace career under this monarch, Nakkaş Hasan became a military commander under Ahmed I (r. 1603–17), a role in which he also excelled: he later rose to the position of janissary commander and finally achieved the rank of *paşa*.⁴⁵ Nakkaş Hasan's most remarkable depiction of Sultan Mehmed III is surely the figure on horseback that he included in his depiction of the monarch's triumphant entry into Istanbul after the Ottoman victory at Mezökeresztes/Haçova in 1596. This campaign resulted in the conquest of Eger/Eğri, and the sultan from now onward was known as the 'conqueror of Eğri'.⁴⁶ It is through Nakkaş Hasan's work that the physical features of the sultan have become known to posterity: the short stocky figure with a dense dark beard trimmed into a straight, almost square shape. This image was widely copied, so that presumably quite a few inhabitants of Istanbul would have recognized the monarch if they saw him, perhaps on his way to Friday prayers.

Mehmed III may have placed special stress on the propagation of his image, as his enthronement had given rise to popular unrest. The law promulgated by his ancestor Mehmed the Conqueror enjoined sultans after ascending the throne to kill their brothers for the 'sake of the order of the world', in other words to ensure that the struggle for the succession would be decided once and for all.⁴⁷ However, this command had no basis in Islamic law, unless one chose to interpret these killings as part of the 'political' leeway conceded to a monarch. When Murad III died in 1595, he left a large number of very small children; Mehmed III had the males among them killed nonetheless. When the tiny coffins were carried out of the Topkapı Palace, quite a few inhabitants of the capital clearly showed

their distress. The author Mustafa Âlî, no great admirer of Murad III, formulated his criticism in a manner that will strike a chord in present-day readers: if the sultan had considered the fate of his sons once he was dead, he would have avoided engendering such a huge progeny.⁴⁸ We do not know whether, in his short reign, Mehmed III ever managed to live down these distressing scenes.⁴⁹

(PLATE 9) REPRESENTING THE SULTAN AT A
FOREIGN ISLAMIC COURT

Ottoman sultans and Mughal emperors did not exchange many embassies. Somewhat acidly, Akbar's son Jahāngīr (r. 1605–27) commented in his memoirs that the Ottomans had never sent him an ambassador, although they should have done so; for their ancestor, meaning Sultan Bayezid I (r. 1389–1402), had been defeated by Timur Lenk (Tamerlane), the revered ancestor of the Mughal dynasty. Jahāngīr made this remark when a man appeared at his court claiming to be an Ottoman envoy; but the Mughal chancery refused to accept him, for the very reason that his arrival was completely unprecedented.⁵⁰ However, in the reign of Shah Jahān (r. 1628–58) if not earlier, an Ottoman ambassador did appear at the court in Agra; for Murad IV (r. 1623–40) responded to a missive from the Emperor that reached him in his army camp near Mosul. Of necessity, sending an answer to Agra involved the dispatch of an Ottoman envoy.

Perhaps Murad IV used this occasion to respond in kind to a somewhat patronizing missive, for in his letter he highlighted his recent reconquest of Baghdad, and sharply commented on the many 'heretics' that the Mughals tolerated in their empire. After the sultan's death, moreover, a missive from Sultan İbrahim (r. 1640–48) arrived at the Indian court, so the Mughals must have received at least two Ottoman envoys before the deposition of Shah Jahān in 1658.⁵¹ In 1687, when Aurangzeb (r. 1658–1707) was conquering almost all of India, the recently enthroned Sultan Süleyman II (r. 1687–91) decided to send embassies announcing his accession to a number of rulers, including those of India.⁵² But we do not know whether, in the midst of a war against the Habsburgs, this expedition actually set out.

As the miniature reproduced here dates to about 1650, the ambassador must have been at the Mughal court in the reign of Shah Jahān, or perhaps, if the dating is only approximate, during the very first years of Aurangzeb's reign. He may have been the personage sent out by the young Sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1648–87). After all, the official chronicler Mustafa Naima has reported that after the Indian ambassador Kā'im Bey had had his

farewell audience with the sultan and received permission to return (August 1656), the Ottoman ruler decided to send a reply through an ambassador of his own, namely Ma'an-zade Hüseyin Ağa, the scion of a princely Lebanese family raised at the Ottoman court. After travelling on different routes as far as Basra, the two envoys crossed the Indian Ocean together.⁵³

Identifying the unknown Ottoman ambassador depicted here becomes even more difficult because, at least today, the surviving miniature is on a single sheet and thus not part of any narrative.⁵⁴ Whoever he may have been, the ambassador struck his portraitist, who depicted his model's head in strict profile and the body in three-quarters profile, as a dignified gentleman in later middle age, whose greying beard was short and pointed. Mughal painters placed great stress on facial features: we thus clearly see the ambassador's slightly sunken eyes and somewhat beaky nose, while the skin colouring was pinkish; evidently the artist had depicted what, by Indian standards, would have been a light skin. On his head, the diplomat wore a small round turban with a barely visible golden or gilt ornament. Protruding very slightly from the turban, the ambassador's cap was red with some gold embroidery. Evidently fashions had changed since the 1500s, when Ottoman dignitaries supported their turbans with high pointed red caps, although the latter had never been as high as those worn by the emissaries of the Shah of Iran.

Vividly red, the ambassador's cloak was lined with brown fur; perhaps it was a robe of honour awarded by the sultan. Underneath, the Ottoman emissary wore a green caftan with gold embroidery, held by a golden or gilt belt, while his shoes were yellow, a colour often limited to elite Muslim figures.⁵⁵ If the impression gained from the miniature is correct – though its accuracy has been doubted – the ambassador's robe, worn over his *entari*, had a wide collar extending all the way to the feet of the wearer; therefore near the ground, a much broader strip of fur was visible than on the shoulders.⁵⁶ As for the fabric, it was plain and thus showed the stitching around the short slit in the cloak which must have kept the fur in place.

Presumably the painter had depicted the ambassador at his farewell audience; for in his hands the latter held a pouch of embroidered silk, of the kind in which Mughal emperors sent out their missives; perhaps one day, it will surface in the archives of the Topkapı Palace.

(PLATE 10) A YOUNG SULTAN ON PARADE

The mid-sixteenth-century succession struggles between the sons of Süleyman I were the last of their kind. From the later 1600s, princes grew up in the seclusion of the Topkapı Palace, often with little preparation for the challenges they might encounter.

But before 1648, the empire went through a transitional period between succession by means of struggle and fratricide on the one hand, and routinized succession on the basis of seniority on the other. In this context, the successive deaths and depositions of sultans profoundly shook the palace establishment: Mustafa I (r. 1617–18 and 1622–23) was twice enthroned and soon deposed as mentally unfit to rule; Osman II was still a teenager when, after a five-year reign, the janissaries dethroned and murdered him (1622). Murad IV (r. 1623–40) acceded to the sultanate when still a child, while Sultan İbrahim, who seems to have had psychological problems, was deposed in 1648 and assassinated shortly afterward.⁵⁷

For a long time these events were regarded as evidence of the ‘Ottoman decline’, which had first been diagnosed by certain Ottoman intellectuals of the years before and after 1600. However, many scholars concerned with Ottoman history today reject this view, as it prevents us from appreciating the many successful adaptations and adjustments for which Ottoman elites can take credit: for in the end, the empire survived the *fin-de-siècle* crisis. In fact it existed for some 600 years under the rule of the same dynasty, a feat that few polities anywhere in the world have managed to rival. Therefore many of today’s historians try to avoid value judgements, emphasizing instead seventeenth-century social and political changes. In particular, the mutual assimilation of soldiers and urban craftsmen allowed a larger section of the empire’s urban population to make their voices heard, through petitioning, ‘street demonstrations’, and even in rebellions that might topple high-level dignitaries and occasionally even the sultan. In consequence, the ‘political class’ of the empire expanded during the 1600s and 1700s. But as a corollary, many eighteenth-century Ottoman military corps came to resemble units of militiamen more than ‘regular’ soldiers; and this fact seriously limited their utility against professional armies.⁵⁸

In the new political set-up of the late 1500s and early 1600s, the role of the sultan also changed appreciably. But while the top-level elites may have preferred a monarch who reigned but did not rule, not all seventeenth-century monarchs agreed with the new dispensation. A recent study has even shown that Mehmed IV (b. 1642, r. 1648–87), whom previous researchers had considered the archetypal *sultan fainéant*, had ambitions to be a conqueror and successful promoter of Islamization. But the failure of his favoured grand vizier Kara Mustafa Paşa in the siege of Vienna (1683) and the subsequent loss of Hungary resulted in this ruler’s deposition and long-lasting reputation as an irresponsible person devoted only to the hunt.⁵⁹

But the image discussed here reflects an early stage of the sultan’s career, when he was still in his teens. In 1657–58, the Swedish king Carl X Gustaf (r. 1654–60) sent two embassies to Istanbul, because he wanted Ottoman support for an attack against Poland, a request which the sultan – or perhaps

rather the grand vizier Köprülüzade Mehmed Paşa (c. 1575–1661) – ultimately rejected. Politically speaking, this embassy was a complete failure.

However, contemporaries and present-day historians find the enterprise interesting, as one of the two ambassadors sent out, a nobleman and lawyer named Claes Rålamb, left a diary recording his experiences in Istanbul and especially a grand parade celebrating the departure of Mehmed IV for a hunting trip to the environs of Edirne.⁶⁰ Presumably this elaborate ceremony presented the young prince to the inhabitants of his capital, where he was not very well known. After all, soon after his enthronement senior officials had removed the child-sovereign to Edirne, as during the Ottoman–Venetian war over Crete, the situation in Istanbul during the 1650s was quite tense; for as long as the Venetian navy blockaded the Dardanelles, food arrived only with difficulty. Apparently Mehmed IV came to appreciate Edirne and was to live there during most of his long reign. Thus parading the young sultan through the streets of Istanbul was an effective means of introducing the ruler to his capital and the latter's inhabitants to their monarch.⁶¹

Claes Rålamb watched this parade and described it in his diary; he also commissioned a set of 20 oil paintings documenting the participants and their characteristic costumes. Rålamb's commission was unusual because of its size and costliness; by contrast simple depictions of sultanic parades were a favourite topic among European publishers of news-sheets during the 1600s, perhaps because of the growing emphasis on ceremony in the French, Habsburg and other courts.⁶² According to the fashion of the times, Rålamb also owned a volume of Ottoman costume figures. In the later 1500s, European embassies, in a more or less ad hoc fashion, had begun to collect information about the clothing and accoutrements of Ottoman dignitaries on official occasions. After all, even without knowing Turkish, a man well versed in this aspect of Ottoman material culture could figure out the status of the people he was talking to. Among collections useful for foreign diplomats, in the later seventeenth century the French ambassador Charles de Ferriol commissioned a systematic collection including the costumes of the major Ottoman office-holders.⁶³

Yet costume figures geared to the needs of diplomats were a special case of the more broadly based collections depicting a variety of people and professions. Albums of the latter type, often with a focus on petty trades conducted in the street, or else female clothing, were compiled in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for many European regions, with occasional additions from the outside world as well.⁶⁴ Visitors to Istanbul commissioned similar pictures, probably sometimes from local artists; and Claes Rålamb's commission may also have gone to such a person. But even if the artists inhabited Istanbul, the images they produced documented

the 'gaze' of the outsider to a greater or lesser extent. Some were costume depictions in the strict sense of the word, in that they only showed one or two people together with their 'typical' clothes and accoutrements; others were genre scenes with a story to tell, which also highlighted the characteristic clothing of the protagonists (see Chapter 4).⁶⁵

Rålamb's collection is special first of all because of the size of the paintings and the fact that they had been executed in oil, and secondly because we do not have much Ottoman pictorial evidence from the mid 1600s, when the sultan's court had lost much of its earlier enthusiasm for painting. Furthermore the artist(s), while certainly familiar with earlier European depictions of Ottoman parades, did not simply copy the work of their predecessors, but used information gathered on the spot, probably while attending the parade together with the ambassador. As the depictions are reasonably accurate and it is difficult to memorize a huge set of costumes after just one viewing, the painter(s) probably collected additional information from people familiar with Ottoman ceremonial.

Rålamb came from a country never involved in anti-Ottoman wars, and which had no ambition to become a Mediterranean power. Thus anti-Ottoman sentiments were of limited importance in Swedish official discourse; and this fact enhanced the value of the paintings. Perhaps Rålamb's personality also had a role to play; for both in his official report and his personal diary he mostly maintained a 'neutral' attitude vis-à-vis the Ottomans, and avoided presenting them as monstrous or fearsome.⁶⁶

What about the portrayal of the teenage monarch? Differently from what we have seen in the depictions made for the Mughal emperors, the artist(s) working for Rålamb were not concerned about a true-to-life appearance and satisfied with a generic image. But they did take the sultan's age into account, as he had neither a moustache nor a beard.⁶⁷ Remarkably, the clothing of Sultan Mehmed was not much richer than that of his courtiers, although the stones ornamenting his headdress might have been more expensive than those of his servitors. If the picture was at all accurate, we may wonder whether the young man had decided for himself to wear modest attire. He may also have followed the advice of senior courtiers including his mother Hatice Turhan.

For the most part, it is the rich caparison of the sultan's horse that shows his high status; most remarkable is the horse-tail (*tug*) suspended from the neck of the animal and which hangs down almost to its feet (see Chapter 5). Although the use of gold and silver jewellery is not permitted to Muslim males, custom normally exempted royals and their courtiers, as obvious from the jewels in the monarch's headdress and the ornaments of his servitors. But decorating his horse allowed an Ottoman gentleman to have the best of both worlds.

(PLATE 11) AT THE CLOSE OF THE OTTOMAN ANCIEN RÉGIME

When Sultan Mahmud II ascended the throne in 1808, the empire was negotiating one of the most serious crises of its existence. It was only with British help that the armies of Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807) had managed to end the Napoleonic occupation of Egypt; and in 1808 the Hejaz was still in the hands of the Wahhabis. As a result, the Ottoman sultans' vaunted role as protectors of the pilgrimage was, for the time being, of no practical significance. Moreover, the empire had been at war with Russia since 1805–6 and in 1807 there had been a brief confrontation with Great Britain, the only one before the Great War. A major naval defeat in 1807 had been the immediate cause of the deposition of Selim III that same year; given the weakness of the Ottoman navy, the British had been able to actually threaten Istanbul.⁶⁸

The war against the Tsar, in which Ottoman forces had been defeated several times by much smaller Russian contingents, only ended in 1812 with the Treaty of Bucharest, by which the Russians annexed part of Moldavia. To a considerable extent, Ottoman defeats were due to the fact that neither the janissaries, now more an urban militia than a trained army, nor the irregular troops recruited by provincial magnates for single campaigns were able to cope with a professional army, even though Russian soldiers were often under-supplied and the Tsar's bureaucrats frequently derailed reforms suggested by his commanders.⁶⁹

Mahmud II reacted to this situation by moving against the magnates who since the late 1600s had established control over large sections of the Balkans, Anatolia and the Arab lands, intermittently contributing appreciable contingents to the Ottoman armies. In 1808 the most prominent magnates had indeed assembled in Istanbul to conclude a deed of alliance (*sened-i ittifak*) by which they replaced Mustafa IV (r. 1807–08) by the young Prince Mahmud. By the same token, they pledged to organize a central army in return for recognition as legitimate 'shareholders' in the Ottoman enterprise, thus committing themselves to the empire's defence with all the resources at their disposal. Another janissary rebellion ensured that this deed was never implemented; and over the next two decades, Mahmud II managed to remove most of these magnates from power.⁷⁰ But when confronted with Mehmed/Muhammad Ali Paşa of Egypt, the sultan could only maintain his rule with the help of the European great powers including Russia, the Ottoman Empire's long-term enemy.

In 1826, in a bloody struggle that chroniclers in his service called the 'auspicious event' (*vak'a-yı hayriye*) Mahmud II used a janissary uprising against his military reforms as an occasion for wholesale annihilation of the corps and its members. According to sources close to the British embassy,

Sultan Mahmud began a reign of terror that continued throughout the summer and autumn. Supposedly some 6–8,000 men were executed, and an even larger number banished from the city.⁷¹ In the vacuum thus created, Mahmud II pushed through the institution of his new corps the 'Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad' (*Asakir-i mansure-i muhammediye*). To pre-empt opposition, the sultan took special care to obtain the acquiescence of the higher echelons of the religious-cum-juridical establishment (*ulema*), to whom this campaign was presented as a move to eradicate heresy: traditionally close to the janissaries, the Bektaşî order of dervishes became the sultan's bête noire.

In this context Mahmud II began to appear in the uniform that he had chosen for the officers of the new-style army, and which included a fez worn alone, rather than as the support for a turban as had been customary in the past. A wide pelerine complemented a close-fitting jacket, breeches and boots; and the sultan encouraged both Ottoman and foreign artists to depict him in this outfit. He also ordered his portrait to be displayed in public places, a move which caused some opposition on religious grounds. Small standardized versions of this portrait might be painted on ivory and framed in gold and precious stones; foreign diplomats might receive these items as a farewell gift, and quite a few examples survive.⁷² Many portraits of the sultan show him with small medals suspended on a chain around his neck, and the court evidently expected the recipients to wear his gift in the same fashion.

But already before this changeover, Mahmud II had had quite a few portraits painted, which showed him in the traditional official robes. This move was not a complete innovation; during the later 1700s the Ottoman court – and probably Sultans Abdülhamid I (r. 1774–89) and Selim III – came to consider that the sultan's portrait, in the past confined to illustrated manuscripts seen only by a few elite viewers, could serve what today we would call 'propaganda' purposes. Painted in oil, such pictures could be exchanged with friendly rulers, or even sent to England to be printed; Sultan Selim III especially favoured this kind of artwork. It became common to show the sultan in the shape of a bust; this format was a novelty too as before the later 1700s, it had been normal practice to depict the ruler in full figure, standing, on horseback, seated cross-legged or else on a throne with his legs on the floor.⁷³

Set in an oval frame, the portrait of Sultan Mahmud under discussion here is a bust; but otherwise the image is part of an older tradition. In accordance with custom, the Sultan wears a heavy satin caftan lined with fur and ornamented with a collar falling down his back. As the collar is of a piece with the lining of the cloak, a considerable amount of fur is visible around the shoulders and on the back. Eighteenth-century fashions

are also in evidence: for the caftan is closed not by thin jewelled bands as had been the custom in the 1500s, but rather by a series of broad tapes set with numerous diamonds, the frogging being placed so close together as to give the appearance of a breastplate. This ornament already appears in the portraits of Mustafa III (r. 1757–74), Abdülhamid I, and Selim III and seems to reflect a fashion for diamonds at the contemporary Ottoman court. Similarly to his father Abdülhamid in his best-known portrait, Mahmud II also wears a diamond-studded ornament in his headdress.⁷⁴

It would be interesting to know more about the reasons why turquoises, emeralds, coral and rubies, much in evidence in earlier court jewellery, seem to have lost the sultans' favour at just this time. Apparently the palace continued to cherish diamonds during the following years as well: thus Mihrîşah Valide Sultan (d. 1805), the mother of Selim III, sent a golden lamp set with diamonds to decorate the Kaaba and Sultan Abdülmecid (r. 1839–61) showed the same preference by donating two golden chandeliers studded with diamonds.⁷⁵

Although the beard of Mahmud II shows no traces of grey, the skin around the eyes appears to be that of a middle-aged and somewhat careworn person. By contrast, most of the portraits that feature the sultan wearing the uniform of his new troops show him as a younger man and in more dynamic, imperious poses. Presumably this was not a chance occurrence and the intended message may have been that the sultan's new army had revived his person and by that means his empire as well. But we do not know who was responsible for this decision.

Conclusion

Ottoman sovereigns used various means to demonstrate their power, which differed according to the audiences to be addressed. The helmet made in Venice for Süleyman the Lawgiver (or the Magnificent) was to show an educated audience in Latinate Europe that the sultan was a warlike hero who, through his conquests, had gained a position superior to that of the Pope, and who might even become the monarch of the entire world, the last one to rule before the end of time. As for the miniature showing the Ottoman ambassador in Agra, it shows the kind of impression that such a dignitary might have made at the court of the Mughals; thus we can regard this item as a counterpart to the imagery, often well studied, which shows the position that various European courts accorded to the sultan's envoys.

Concerning European perceptions, we have here presented a rather special case. While the portrait of Mehmed IV in the midst of a solemn procession may not have been very realistic in terms of physiognomy, the paintings commissioned by Claes Râmb showed the sultan surrounded

by his court officials, in a parade which exhibited him to locals and foreigners alike. Such a public appearance documented Ottoman power and prestige, although the young monarch's political and military role was comparatively limited.⁷⁶ By contrast, the portraits of Mehmed III and Mahmud II are products of the Ottoman tradition of royal image-making, which had been developed by the Istanbul court, though not without reference to Italian Renaissance painting. It is most intriguing that sultans' portraits moved to and fro across the eastern Mediterranean, Istanbul creations being adapted in Italy and the reverse occurring as well.

From the start, the portraits of Ottoman sovereigns were thus a product of intercultural contacts. In the Timurid tradition, inherited from earlier empires, it had been customary to depict rulers holding court, hunting, or waging victorious wars. This manner of depicting a sultan continued in the Ottoman world; thus in the mid 1500s, the *Süleymannâme* showed not only the heroic deeds of Sultan Süleyman, but also defined his place in the history of creation, by aligning him with the heroic figures of early Islamic history.⁷⁷ In a similar vein, and under the book-loving Sultan Murad III, the courtly author Seyyid Lokman wrote the *Hünernâme* featuring the heroic deeds of the early Ottoman sultans, a work then illustrated by a group of painters under the supervision of Nakkaş Osman.⁷⁸ Admittedly Sultan Murad did not participate in any campaigns; yet two manuscripts, completed in 1581 and 1592, carried forward the story of his reign, with his commanders gaining victories in his place.⁷⁹

Images showing the sultan 'in action' continued into the late 1500s and early 1600s, highlighting the victory of Mehmed III in the Eger/Eğri campaign and the short life of Osman II.⁸⁰ But otherwise, Ottoman sultans of the 1600s appeared mostly in genealogies, a format that emphasized not the rulers as individuals but rather their roles as representatives of a dynasty. However, the miniatures created in this context sometimes found their way into costume albums created for foreigners, where the ceremonial robes were the centre of attention; and thus the legitimizing image of the Ottoman dynasty became known to certain viewers in Latinate Europe as well.⁸¹ It is a great pity that the surviving sources so rarely depict how the Ottoman imperial image was presented and received at the Safavid and Mughal courts.

Yet thanks to ongoing research, we have more information about the reception of legitimizing discourses by various sectors of Ottoman society.⁸² In the following chapter, we will catch a glimpse of the latter and its inherent divisions.

CHAPTER 3

SOCIETY AND ITS DIVISIONS

This chapter takes up the theme of the fundamental divisions in Ottoman society: between men and women, peasants and townsfolk, free people and slaves. As ‘background information’, we also need to dwell on the difference between the taxpaying population (*reaya*) and the nearly tax-free servitors of the sultans (*askeri*). Gender defined rights and obligations under Islamic law; sultan law by contrast, given its strong focus on taxation, had little to say about women. Peasants formed the vast majority of the population; in some areas, they shared their living spaces with nomads and semi-nomads, sometimes amicably and sometimes rather less so. Adult male inhabitants of Ottoman towns and cities were privileged, if not in terms of life chances, then at least in terms of the records concerning their material lives which have come down to us.

Ottoman slavery involved ordinary servants – and in the case of women, concubines – and as a separate category, elite slaves with a chance of rising to high positions. In this chapter, we will focus on the ‘ordinary’ and unglamorous variety. Slaves had often been captured, in wars or else in peacetime raids; the latter might result in the illegal enslavement of people who, being subjects of the sultan, should have been exempt.¹ Enslaved people were bought and sold and formed part of their owners’ patrimonies. Yet manumission was common, as it was a meritorious act according to Islam; as a result few people had been born into slavery.² After manumission the former owner retained the right to a share in the patrimony of his ex-slave.

All these categories overlapped; thus peasants and town dwellers, as well as free people and slaves, were of necessity either men or women. The wives and daughters of elite males also counted as *askeri*, and their estates might appear in registers otherwise dedicated to their male relatives.³ Our information on male peasants is scanty, rural women remaining completely in the shadow. Though suffering restrictions, such as the obligation to

remain in their villages unless they were given permission to move, peasants were normally freemen by birth and as subjects of a Muslim ruler, they could not legally be enslaved. But they would have been unable – for instance – to reinvent themselves as travelling traders, a right otherwise enjoyed by adult males according to Islamic law. A seventeenth-century sultan's command, in response to the petition of a freed slave (or freedman) named Angelo put this point quite forcefully: the petitioner could settle wherever he desired and – having remained a Christian – even return to his homeland.⁴

As for individual subjects of the sultans, their fates were defined by the categories into which society had placed them and, to a limited extent, the choices that they could make even within these constraints. Furthermore – and this concern is important for our purposes – the availability or inaccessibility of certain material goods co-determined life chances.

Social change in the course of the empire's 600-year history was much more frequent and profound than previous generations of Ottomanist historians have been ready to admit; and thus gender and social status, to say nothing of personal freedom or slavery, might have dramatically different implications at different times. To give just one example from the history of slavery: in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, prosperous Ottoman subjects owned both male and female slaves. But by the late 1600s, at least in Istanbul, the slaves manumitted by such people seem to have been mainly women; presumably the slave population also was largely female. We do not yet know the reasons for this change; it is also unknown whether the prevalence of female slavery was an exclusively Istanbul phenomenon.⁵

The elite

Ottoman authors writing about their world considered the division between tax-takers (*askeri*) and taxpayers (*reaya*) fundamental; the predominance of this sentiment is not particularly astonishing, as there are few surviving texts not written by members of the elite and their hangers-on. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries quite a few young men entered the sultans' service because they had been drafted as boys from among the Christian population (*devşirme*) and raised to be soldiers; if very fortunate, they became courtiers and administrators. These chances for advancement explain why some Bosnian Muslims were willing to send their sons to Istanbul as *devşirme* boys. However, certain members of the elite had inherited their positions; while a man who had received a military tax assignment (*timar*) could not normally pass on his revenue grant to his son, the latter did inherit the all-but-exclusive right to apply for similar positions whenever they fell vacant.⁶ In the 1600s and 1700s,

when many young men entered the elite after education in the household of a vizier or provincial grandee, support from their patrons – who operated as surrogate fathers – became an even more important consideration.⁷ Thus while the Ottoman Empire never acquired a legally privileged nobility of the type known in Latin Europe, families with an aristocratic lifestyle were by no means unknown.

Certain young slaves might enter the elite if, as happened sometimes during the sixteenth century, their owners gifted them to the sultan so as to boost their own careers. Moreover, at the death of an elite figure, the palace might take over his slaves as part of the estate, which was liable to confiscation; for among the *askeri*, only judges and professors could pass on their goods and chattels to their heirs.⁸ In Algiers and Tunis during the 1600s and 1700s, certain slaves, after accepting Islam, might serve on corsair ships and in due course enter the local elite, which in these provinces was almost purely military and naval. In eighteenth-century Baghdad, moreover, slaves from Georgia were sometimes groomed by their owners as future successors and integrated into the households of the latter by marriage to the patrons' daughters.⁹

In principle religious scholars, who from a certain level upward also formed part of the *askeri*, were in a different position; for any Muslim youth who successfully completed his training at a *medrese* could hope for a career as a judge or college professor. But already in the late 1500s, we find members of one and the same family holding high positions, simultaneously or else consecutively; and this situation must have made entry for newcomers more difficult. However, in the seventeenth century, it was still possible for outsiders to make careers as judges and *medrese* teachers, at least if they came from an urban milieu – the chances for peasant boys apparently were negligible.¹⁰ But after 1703, when the sultan's court tried to increase its control over religious scholars, studies in Istanbul *medreses* became a condition *sine qua non* for entry into the official religious-cum-juridical hierarchy (*ilmiye*): provincial schools now only permitted their former students low-level careers as imams or administrators of local pious foundations. By the eighteenth century, the higher ranks of the *ilmiye* thus were part of the 'aristocracy' running the sultans' empire. Religious studies were normally the appanage of males; but occasionally women from a scholarly milieu also received an education and might distinguish themselves in poetry or the study of prophetic traditions (*hadis*).¹¹

The works and possessions of women

Most women depended on their male relatives for sustenance, and therefore only rarely appeared in Ottoman documents apart from the

registers of local law courts; they might also 'become visible' if appealing to the central government because they felt that male relatives had violated their rights to a – usually modest – share in an inheritance.

For the historian of material culture, it is a major problem that female handiwork, even if surviving, is rarely characterized as such. Thus when trying to approach the material culture of Ottoman females, we can only turn to objects that had once belonged to them. Outside the collections of the Topkapı Palace, even that kind of material is scarce, at least where the period before 1850 is concerned.¹² But in the latter museum, there is a remarkable collection of ornamented mirrors, presumably at least some of them originally the property of women in the imperial harem.¹³ This assemblage is especially noteworthy because some of the items go back to the pre-Ottoman period; presumably some inmate(s) of the palace, male or female, had been collectors. Clothing intended for women is not in very ample supply either. This gap in our knowledge explains the excitement with which art historians at the 14th International Congress of Turkish Art (Paris, 2011) presented some caftans found during the recent restoration of the sultans' mausoleums adjacent to Aya Sofya, and which once had belonged to princesses.¹⁴ Outside the palace, there are a few surviving dresses once belonging to ladies of the late 1700s and early 1800s; as for older fashions, we possess a variety of album paintings (see Chapters 4 and 7).¹⁵ If we wish to go yet further back in time, there is a fifteenth-century miniature, seemingly less stylized than others of its kind, which may depict contemporary female clothes.¹⁶

But apart from the work of Abdülcélil Levni (b. 1680s, d. 1732), Ottoman miniatures differed from their Indian counterparts, in that they depicted very few women in identifiable historical contexts. As for the illustrations of literary works, which did exist in larger numbers, presumably the clothing was conventional and the artists did not necessarily represent garments worn at the time of painting. Thus even though European draftsmen and painters were much given to copying from dubious models, for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries other evidence is difficult to find. Certainly, the depictions of these European observers are not necessarily reliable, as they had never seen Ottoman ladies in indoor clothing and must have depicted whatever they were shown, perhaps by a salesman of second-hand garments; this clothing may thus have been inappropriate for the type of woman depicted in the costume image. Given the scarcity of alternatives, however, scholars have paid much attention to the costume drawings accompanying the travelogue of Nicolas de Nicolay and those found in the late sixteenth-century collection known as *Gli abiti di tutto il mondo*.¹⁷

The submerged world of the village

What we know about Ottoman peasants of the 1400s and 1500s is mostly based on archival documentation; however, even written information is difficult to locate for the period after 1600, when government bureaux had ceased to compile the great tax registers (*tahrir*, *tapu tahrir*) recording the taxpaying population province by province and village by village.¹⁸ Most rural dwellers attended urban courts only if the latter were close by; and thus inheritance registers covering peasants are rare, although as previously noted, villagers and nomads formed the vast majority of the population throughout the empire's existence. When peasants are found, for instance in eighteenth-century letters of complaint to the central government, frequently it was a case of members of the elite complaining about the villagers' behaviour, and not the other way around. However, the available documentation does yield a certain amount of information about village life, at least in the environs of great cities.

When it comes to material remains, for the period before 1850 the work of peasants remains just as difficult to grasp as that of women: this is a major paradox, as the entire Ottoman world with its sultans, magnates, soldiers, and merchants rested on the labour performed on innumerable family farms. No pre-industrial polity including the Ottoman would have survived without the taxes and tithe grains that villagers often delivered; and even when the latter supposedly sold their products, it was often at prices way below market value.¹⁹

But food was soon consumed, peasant huts were often built of very fragile materials; and what has survived of rural crafts usually goes back no further than the late 1800s or early 1900s. The few peasant inventories from earlier periods give us the names of certain items, but do not show us what they looked like. After all, items in daily use were made of perishable materials including wood, leather or cloth; only village ceramics had a reasonable chance of survival. But, as we have seen, Ottoman archaeology is still an underdeveloped field; and publications on peasant settlements directed at an international readership have appeared only in a few countries, including Hungary and Greece.²⁰ Moreover, in Turkey almost all ethnographical museums were established only after 1923; unless private collectors have filled the gap, ethnographical material for our period is all but impossible to find.

Further lacunae are due to the migrations, expulsions, and resettlements that occurred in Anatolia and the Balkans in the later nineteenth and particularly the twentieth century. It bears repeating that many possessions were lost: sold, stolen, or simply thrown out. Even images of

villagers are rare, although a few – probable – peasants occur in the depictions of the 1582 and 1720 processions; no pictures survive of the mid-seventeenth-century parade witnessed by the French scholar Antoine Galland, which celebrated the beginning of a sultanic campaign and prominently featured the figure of a peasant. As Galland saw it, this imagery highlighted the fact that warfare was impossible without sufficient stores of food.²¹

Towns and townspeople

Peasants and urbanites inhabiting the larger towns lived rather different lives, even though in law, both were non-elite subjects (*reaya*) of the sultan. The inhabitants of Istanbul were most privileged, for they could buy many goods at controlled prices, sometimes even lower than the going market rate. Sultans and viziers saw to the maintenance of this privilege, as discontent in the capital might endanger their positions. Even so, many townspeople were quite poor. Furthermore the government's concern with what its members perceived as public disorder involved a closer supervision of the behaviour of Istanbul inhabitants than presumably was customary in other Ottoman cities; and from the 1700s onward, officialdom spent a prodigious amount of energy trying to curb immigration into the capital. As a result, more documents deal with Istanbul than with any other Ottoman city; and more material evidence survives as well.

Artisans and traders were the principal inhabitants of Ottoman towns. However, quite often, income from gardens and vineyards supplemented money derived from urban pursuits in the narrower sense of the word. Often gardens became an important source of livelihood only if a village was in the process of turning into a town; and some townspeople substantially added to their well-being by consuming and selling the products of their orchards and vegetable plots.

In urban contexts, there often survive sizeable numbers of inheritance inventories reflecting the goods that a townsman, and sometimes even a townswoman, might have in his/her shop or dwelling. A good deal of work has been done on the material culture of Cairo and Damascus, and more recently, of Bursa as well.²² While researchers generally agree that whatever wealth existed was concentrated in very few hands and most townspeople were quite poor, at least in Bursa between the mid 1500s and the mid 1600s, political crises did not prevent a noticeable increase in the material goods on record in inheritance inventories. Apparently the enrichment of material culture was less directly connected to the sultans' conquests than previously believed; and imperial aggrandizement did

not necessarily mean that ordinary households became more opulent. However, as an exception to this rule, the successful campaigns of the fifteenth and sixteenth century did cause a drop in the price of slaves, who, for a while, could be found in relatively modest households (see also the Introduction).²³

Captives, slaves and freedmen

Our knowledge concerning slaves and manumitted ex-slaves (freedmen) is also quite limited; and what we do know is distorted because records so often concern exceptional fates. After all, where the early modern period is concerned, many reports come from ex-slaves whose home was in Latinate Europe and who finally returned to their respective countries. These men – women usually became the concubines or freedwomen-wives of local males and thus never returned – surely were not representative of the slave population. Furthermore those leaving memoirs were literate, and literacy was a minority phenomenon throughout the early modern world.²⁴ In addition we often know more about captives not as yet enslaved than about slaves properly speaking; for ransom or exchange negotiations left paper trails.²⁵ Once these discussions had failed, information also tended to dry up.

Little evidence survives on the numerous Ukrainians captured by Tatar raiders and sold in the Ottoman lands.²⁶ The stories of slaves from the Caucasus also are on record mostly for the nineteenth century; therefore book-length studies on Ottoman slaves concentrate on this late period.²⁷ Matters are further complicated by the Orientalist discourse on female slavery in the Islamic world; and sober scholars often need to spend considerable time and energy distancing their work from this manner of depiction. And while insisting on the profound difference between slavery in the Ottoman world and the fate of black slaves in the Americas, we should not conceal the miseries of people performing unfree labour under whatever circumstances: the late Ottoman and early Republican musician and writer Leyla Saz (previously known simply as Hanim) was under no illusions concerning this matter.²⁸

Once again, there are not many images or other material remains connected with slaves; and much of our Ottoman evidence once again is archival. Documents concerning slaves that were sold, promised their freedom and finally manumitted might enter the records of the qadis' courts. Freedmen needed to possess documents certifying their free status, as otherwise they risked arrest by the men that had farmed the dues (*müjde-i abd-ı abik*) collected from those slave owners whose human property they had captured while in flight. Such dues farmers might claim

that whatever strangers they encountered were escaped slaves. Occasionally the judges' registers contain brief notes about an individual imprisoned as an escaped slave, who was later on able to prove his free status; but there is no evidence of such people receiving compensations for 'unjust arrest'.

Last but not least, there were the Ottoman captives in the German-speaking lands who also often became slaves, at least before about 1700. We have the memoir of just one such person, Osman Ağa from Lipva, who was taken prisoner in 1688 and enslaved, although he had already paid his ransom.²⁹ This Ottoman officer was unusual not only in the sense that he ultimately escaped and wrote about his experiences, but also because he avoided baptism, apparently because he had established a reasonably good relationship with his owners. Otherwise baptism was all but unavoidable; unless of course the slave in question died before that ceremony could take place.

(PLATE 12) HANDSOME YOUTHS AND ATTRACTIVE WOMEN,
AS VIEWED BY AN OTTOMAN PAINTER

Fortunately for us, the painter Abdülcélil Levni has left a series of handsome album miniatures showing both youths and young women of urban backgrounds.³⁰ We do not know who his female models were – some of them perhaps from Istanbul's demi-monde – and whether the artist depicted them with any kind of realism.³¹ Historians have suggested an acquaintance with Western-style artwork by means of the French painter Jean-Baptiste Vanmour (1671–1737), who was active in Istanbul over several decades and enjoyed the patronage of the Dutch ambassador Cornelis Calkoen.³² But even though, in his depictions of crowd scenes, Levni has created an illusion of three-dimensionality, the dominant aesthetic is still Ottoman; and it would be unfair to use his possible – but not proven – acquaintance with Vanmour as evidence for the 'contamination' of his work by European orientalism.³³ Levni's work is also rather different from the ethnographic images produced in eighteenth-century China: the latter were to serve the emperor as a rather systematic record of his expanding empire; but there is no evidence that a similar 'blanket coverage' was the aim of the courtiers sponsoring Levni's paintings.³⁴

But these images – and other Ottoman miniatures – do exemplify the 'gaze' of the adult male; for unlike certain Indian aristocrats, members of the Ottoman elite never sponsored female painters.³⁵ Thus we can interpret Levni's pictures as glorifying the handsomeness and beauty of young people, according to ideals current among Ottoman gentlemen of Istanbul during the early 1700s.

Levni had trained in the official design atelier (*nakkaşhane*) and may have been a student of Musavvir Hüseyin, one of the few eminent miniaturists active in the late 1600s. He was known as a *çelebi*, a title that by the 1600s or 1700s denoted a well-educated gentleman, usually but not necessarily a Muslim.³⁶ Levni may also have documented his status as a member of the sultan's entourage by placing his signature right under the image of a horseman participating in the procession that celebrated the circumcision of the sons of Ahmed III in 1720. It is likely though not proven that he held the title of chief portraitist (*musavvir*) to the sultan. But although Levni, who also left a number of poems, painted for the entourages of Mustafa II (r. 1695–1703), Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) and Mahmud I (r. 1730–54), we do not find his name in the registers of artists and artisans working for the sultan's court (*ehl-i hiref defterleri*). Gül İrepoğlu has suggested that he may have held an official position without any obvious connection to his artistic activities, as sometimes happened in the case of other painters too. Or perhaps he was even a total outsider brought in for specific projects. Be that as it may, Levni's work was sponsored by courtiers and, before the publication of his works in the twentieth century, they probably were visible only in this genteel setting. Somewhat paradoxically, we thus have to turn to an archetypal palace artist for images of young men and women from an urban milieu.

As is evident from their sinuous movements, Levni's single figure images must have been inspired by Iranian models.³⁷ Moreover, the captions sometimes record that the subject belonged to the Safavid/post-Safavid gentry or even the Shah's court.³⁸ These images may have had a political background; for in the late 1710s and early 1720s, the collapse of Safavid rule had encouraged members of the Ottoman elite, including Sultan Ahmed III, to revive old plans for the conquest of Tabriz. Perhaps certain grandees had commissioned Levni's paintings because they were eager to show that Ottoman artists could now emulate the work of the prestigious masters who had once worked for Shah Abbas I (r. 1588–1629) and his successors. Whatever the situation, pictures of single figures apart from sultans had not been a major part of the sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century Ottoman repertoire, dominated by campaigns, dynastic events, illustrations of Iranian-style poetry, religious scenes and geographical depictions.³⁹

Furthermore, as noted, by the 1700s Ottoman elite patrons had become interested in costume pictures, which had often been painted in Istanbul earlier on, but for the benefit of European patrons. To my knowledge, Ottoman authors do not say much about the reasons behind this surge of interest; but perhaps a phenomenon observed in contemporary literary texts, namely the increasing attention paid to scenes of daily life, had an

impact on the pictorial arts as well.⁴⁰ However, at this stage, we do not know enough about the motives of artists and patrons to come up with a convincing explanation. Levni's costume figures may also have been linked to the performances of noted storytellers at the sultan's court; but to date, we cannot identify these tales. Perhaps the young 'Frankish' man with his long-haired wig and lace-edged shirt, a close-fitting red jacket and wide knee-length trousers just showing underneath, was part of such a narrative.⁴¹

Levni has also painted a young woman named Menekşe Tuti, from the city of Bursa. The first of her two names is the equivalent of 'Violet', while the second one refers to a parrot, perhaps because the artist wanted to denote a talkative female.⁴² At first glance, this miniature depicts a figure completely veiled for appearance in public, according to contemporary rules. But even so, Menekşe Tuti has contrived to appear elegant and sophisticated (see Chapter 7). Thus the way in which the figure holds up her wide cloak allows this garment to fall in elegant folds and emphasize her full but shapely figure. The painter has also delicately indicated the young woman's facial features through the fine gauze of her veil. Menekşe's wide cloak (*ferace*) has no collar; and the wearer thus should have avoided the numerous fulminations against large collars often found in eighteenth-century sultans' commands; but perhaps this fashion accessory only became popular after Levni's death.⁴³

As for the young man, whom the caption identifies as Yusuf Beg from Bursa, he shows the fine fur lining of his outer coat, under which he wears a red robe (*entari*; see Chapter 7) coming apart over the feet to show a white lining; but his trousers remain invisible.⁴⁴ Elegantly knotted over the hips, a scarf with a yellow – perhaps brocaded – design holds a number of accessories: a small dagger with what seems to be an ivory grip, a second even smaller dagger and a golden or gilt fob. At least in Levni's imagery and perhaps in real life as well, it was not only gentlemen of the court that attracted attention due to their elegant outfits.

Although the notion of the 'Tulip period' (1718–30) as a time of elegant insouciance, elite dissipation and early 'Westernization' has been discounted by recent scholarship, elite tastes did change significantly in the early 1700s. Now quite a few Ottoman top-level patrons and the artists in their service considered that the style of the 'classical age' had had its day, and that the time had come to try something new and different.⁴⁵ Ideas could come from a variety of sources, but Iranian artwork was in a favoured position, followed – at some distance – by French and Italian designs. Thus Levni, with his interest in three-dimensionality on the one hand, and his Iranian-style sophistication on the other, symbolized the two major tendencies distinguishing Ottoman artists of this period.

(PLATE 13) STANDARDIZED WEIGHTS, SUSPENDED ON A STEELYARD:
A SYMBOL OF THE URBAN MARKETPLACE

Buying and selling was a major reason why towns formed, grew and flourished; and, for this reason, the scales of a trader/artisan will here stand as a symbol for urban life. Furthermore in an environment without factory-packaged goods, shopkeepers had to weigh and measure many items before sale; and the market supervisor/controller (*muhtesib*) needed to ensure that merchants and artisans conformed to the standards customary in the local market. For this purpose, there were standardized weights and measuring rods available, some of which have come down to us. Market transactions must often have been quite complicated because of the variety of weights and especially measures in use; for even in towns fairly close to one another, the receptacles for measuring grain by volume, known as the *kile*, differed significantly even in the early to mid 1900s. A larger measure, known as the *batman* or *batmen*, also varied over time and between regions.⁴⁶ Bona fide misunderstandings about the measures to be used must have occurred, for instance when peasants brought grain to a city where people used a *kile* different from the one to which they were accustomed. At the same time, the resulting confusion must have facilitated the manipulations of tricksters. Market supervisors, who could punish real or imagined misdeeds by nailing the culprits to their own doors, hanging evil-smelling tripe around their necks, making them ride donkeys facing backwards, or else carry wooden collars as a sign of their disgrace, were greatly feared by traders and artisans.⁴⁷

Furthermore as market supervisors often farmed their offices, there must have been a built-in tendency to increase revenue by terrifying salespeople so that they would deliver 'gifts'; in such unfortunate cases, the helpers of a delinquent supervisor probably acted like the 'enforcers' of a *mafioso*. Albeit cautiously, Evliya Çelebi expressed his misgivings by making a wise man say that only God was the real *muhtesib* and that humans taking on that office would be responsible for their doings on Judgement Day.⁴⁸

For the guidance of the *muhtesib*, and probably for those artisans who could read, the Ottoman government from time to time issued registers of administratively enforced prices, the so-called *narh* or *eş'ar defterleri*.⁴⁹ While the primary concern of the compiling officials was the regulation of prices and not that of weights and measures, in practice the two issues were closely connected, because so often the text would have to specify prices by the weight, volume or length of the goods under consideration. However, most of these sources deal with Istanbul alone; and provincial cities get short shrift. Official definitions of weights and measures are

comparatively rare; and, quite often, today's scholars have used the notes of foreign merchants to calculate the relevant metric equivalents. Presumably the merchants who travelled from one place to the next relied on their relatives and business partners for information on local standards, and the probity or otherwise of the local market inspector.

In the case of weights, ambiguities should have been less of a problem than when volume measures were concerned, because the *okka*, also known as *vukiye* or *vakiye*, was standard at 1.2829 kg. Furthermore according to the proverb, wherever he went the traveller would find that 40 *dirhems* (3.2074 g) equalled an *okka*.⁵⁰ But in the 'material culture of measurement', weights occupy the most prominent place. Probably more disputes swirled around them than we might expect; and, in spite of official standardization, the surviving *dirhem* weights do show some variation.⁵¹

Weights, as for example the item shown here, often had the shape of rings to be attached to a steelyard; quite frequently the sultan's monogram or cypher (*tuğra*) authenticated conformity to official standards. If a ring outlasted the duration of a sultan's reign, not a rare occurrence, the item attracted the *tuğras* of different rulers; the ring shown here has a stamp dated to 1222/1807–08. Jewellers used tiny weights, often surviving in boxes which held entire sets.

For lengths, Ottoman subjects used the *arşın*, of which there were several variants; one of them, called the *mimar arşını* (or *zira*, equivalent to 0.7577 m) served to measure buildings and construction materials. Goods sold in the market were measured by the shorter *çarşı arşını* (0.6858 cm).⁵² But in some cases people used more homely standards: thus lengths of simple cotton should have been long enough to line a caftan; presumably everybody in the town in question knew how much fabric that was. Yet certain lengths of cloth might turn out completely non-standard, or so aggrieved customers were likely to complain.

(PLATE 14) A RURAL FAMILY, WORKING COTTON

Ever since the late 1400s, if not earlier, Ottoman peasants had been part of the money economy: after all, they needed to market the grains that the tax-taker of their village had collected in kind.⁵³ Village markets spread throughout Anatolia, as settlement became denser in the course of the 1500s. During the 1600s by contrast, markets must have diminished again in size and frequency, at least in those areas where depopulation was most serious, unless there were countervailing tendencies, such as the growing exportation of cotton from the Aegean coast of Anatolia. But in the absence of seventeenth- or eighteenth-century registers detailing markets, we do not know how many of them survived and how much business the

survivors were able to attract. However, the commercial revival of south-eastern Europe during the 1700s probably resulted in more peasants establishing increasingly intensive market connections, as 'conquering Balkan Orthodox merchants' visited provincial fairs and commercial centres within and outside the Ottoman borders.⁵⁴

It is in this context that we should view the early nineteenth-century genre scene showing Greek villagers working their cotton by Otto Magnus Freiherr von Stackelberg (1786–1837) a German-speaking Baltic aristocrat, mostly known for his work in what was – as yet – Ottoman Greece. Von Stackelberg first visited the region in 1810.⁵⁵

Genre scenes were much in vogue in late eighteenth-century France, where at least in some circles, they helped to make the 'common people' into a worthy subject of depiction. Von Stackelberg in his early career was known mainly as a landscape artist; he had trained in Dresden and Rome, against the wishes of his family that he should pursue a diplomatic career. When travelling in Greece, he produced a series of drawings later published as *Trachten und Gebräuche der Neugriechen* (The Clothing and Customs of Modern Greeks), of which the image shown here forms a part.⁵⁶ Some of the genre scenes in this volume reflect von Stackelberg's abiding interest in the depiction of land- and cityscapes.

By the time of publication, Greece had separated from the Ottoman Empire and become a separate kingdom under the tutelage of European powers, especially Britain. However, von Stackelberg had made his drawings at various earlier dates; and in his introduction to the German text, he explained that he had held up publication for some time. In terms of the period covered, his work is thus a 'borderline case', reflecting scenes viewed in Greece at the very end of the Ottoman period. But as we possess so few images showing rural people, it is surely permissible to stretch period limits a little.

Von Stackelberg depicted the – for him and his readers – 'exotic' costumes worn by Greeks in the style that by the 1600s, European costume albums had established as canonical. Though distributed as prints, his figures featured vibrant colours, a novelty made possible by the recent developments in printmaking, especially lithography. While his 'ethnographic' depictions of life in Greece were a sideline to his landscapes and archaeological drawings, he did produce some full-scale genre pictures as well. Visibly, the artist adhered to the classicist school in art, which had emerged during the second half of the 1700s; but consonant with German classicism of the years around 1800, he also imparted a romantic atmosphere to many of his pictures.

Von Stackelberg's depiction of the cotton-working village family owes a debt to both classical and Renaissance models; and, as a sign of the

times, the artist pictured ordinary people in formal 'noble' poses that in earlier years would have been considered appropriate only for aristocrats. Thus the young girl holding a small boy is reminiscent of the 'Madonna of humility', a type of depiction of the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child frequent in the later Middle Ages and early Renaissance, when the holy figures were shown as ordinary people, seated on the ground rather than on a throne. As for the father of the family, the second person on the left, he wears heavy clothing and is recognizable as a man mainly because of his beard. This figure is busy cleansing the cotton of seed, by putting it through a simple wooden implement; while the seed is not visible, the fluffy cotton resulting from this process is easy to spot behind the figure of the standing child. The right side of the picture is taken up by the depiction of a woman spinning, perhaps the most 'classical' of all the figures presented. The artist has relegated the weaver, probably another woman, to the background; using a simple horizontal loom, she is working under an awning and her head is thus invisible. In the foreground, on the extreme left, there is a person, whose veils and clothes completely conceal his – or probably her – figure and who is busy sewing; but it remains unclear what kind of garment is being made.

We can describe von Stackelberg's image as a genre scene; but at the same time there is a didactic purpose involved in his very deliberate composition. Probably the artist had combined images of textile workers seen in several places, and did not produce a 'snapshot' of any particular scene. The young child busy with a book and seated in the foreground of the picture serves a didactic purpose as well: the family may be living in modest circumstances, as indicated by their hard work and perhaps also by the near-absence of furniture. But ignorant they are not, and in that sense – if my interpretation is correct – the image shows them as dignified descendants of the Ancient Greeks that von Stackelberg and his friends so admired.

(PLATE 15) A JANISSARY AND HIS PRISONER

When İznik faience was flourishing, the decor mostly consisted of stylized and naturalistic flowers. But in the 1600s, when the manufacture was beginning to decline, other subjects also appeared, especially depictions of various animals, sailing ships and stylized garden pavilions. Dated to May 1669, the plate bearing the image shown here belongs to this late period.

Unusually, it features a janissary along with his prisoner. Perhaps the image alludes to an event from the war of 1663–64, which went reasonably well for the Ottomans although the major battle, at

St Gotthard on the Raab, was a victory for the Habsburg forces. Another possibility is the Ottoman–Venetian war over Crete, which ended with the conquest of Heraklion/Kandiye in 1669. Unfortunately we do not know whether the date refers to the capture or to the sale of the prisoner, or perhaps simply to the time of manufacture.

The plate contains an inscription but instead of clarifying the depiction, it only deepens the mystery. While the text is in Greek, colleagues versed in the language of the early modern period have not been able to explain the words *Flapoules kai Primekrous*. Perhaps *Primekrous* is a misspelling for a Latin-derived term denoting the highest-ranking member of any given group. In the Ottoman Balkans, the term *pirimikiür* was occasionally used for the headmen in charge of mobilizing non-Muslims as auxiliaries to the Ottoman armies, for instance as guards or servants responsible for baggage trains. As for the other word, its meaning remains unknown; it may have been a surname.⁵⁷

The janissary displaying his captive, to whom he has attached a halter rather similar to the leashes used today for walking dogs, is immediately recognizable because of his characteristic headdress: a high cap ornamented by a feather in a metal holder. Part of the textile making up the cap hangs down the soldier's back, thus protecting it. Inside his short boots the janissary apparently wears stockings; to prevent his baggy trousers from impeding mobility, he has stuffed them into the leggings. For the same reason, the jacket, probably in one piece, is about knee-length; while the image shows a garment with a green upper and a blue lower section, this may be due to artistic licence. The soldier wears a belt to which he has attached something resembling a pouch or water flask (*matara*; see Chapter 5); his sabre is also on his belt, while over his shoulder he carries a musket. As for the captive, he wears clothes typical of Latinate Europe. A small hat sits on top of his head and he wears his hair quite long. Perhaps the draftsman has intended to show a blond person; but it is hard to be sure. The prisoner's jacket and trousers appear to be of the same dark-blue colour; but their fabric is more rigid than that of the janissary's trousers, so that the garment has been cut to shape and does not require tucking into some other piece of apparel. Perhaps the whiteness of the captive's legs quite simply indicates the absence of stockings.

Such a captive might be a boon to a soldier on the frontier, who received little money and needed to supplement his pay by whatever he could seize. Like cattle-rustling, taking human captives for ransom was normal procedure even in time of peace. Both Habsburgs and Ottomans understood, tacitly or sometimes even explicitly, that raiding below a certain level did not nullify an armistice or peace agreement. Ransoms

were negotiated, sometimes directly between captor and captive, and sometimes through intermediaries; the higher the status/wealth of the captive, the greater the amount of money that the captor might demand.⁵⁸ Chains, of the kind indicated on the plate shown here, might serve as a symbolic object that an ex-captive who had returned from the Ottoman lands might bring back as a votive offer to a pilgrimage church, in recognition of the 'heavenly protection' he had been vouchsafed.⁵⁹

If negotiations failed, the soldier would need to sell his captive; and quite a few janissaries acquired bad reputations for illegal slaving raids.⁶⁰ Expeditions to the north of the Danube, into Wallachia and Moldavia, were especially frequent; for in times of war, the local princes occasionally sided with the enemies of the sultan, and then their subjects would be fair game. But when hostilities had ended and the rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia once more recognized the sultan as their suzerain, such slaving became illegal, although it did not always come to an end. Apart from material gain, 'reputation' was a motivating force as well; for a warrior's prowess in the field, including the taking of captives, increased the respect he would receive from his fellow soldiers.⁶¹

What benefits could an Ottoman owner expect from his male slaves? During the early 1500s, in the vicinity of Istanbul there were slaves working in villages; while some laboured on landholdings belonging to the elite, others were the property of ordinary rural dwellers.⁶² After a battle in which the Ottoman side had taken many captives, the resulting glut probably brought prices down; and janissaries anxious to transform their human booty into cash must have been willing to sell cheap. In this situation, rural dwellers might acquire slaves who would have been out of their reach in 'normal' years.⁶³ In addition, elite households required menial servitors; and many slaves must have wound up labouring in stables, kitchens or orchards.

Conclusion

During the last 30 years or so, historians have dwelt more intensively on the relations between the governing elite and the subject populations. Historians of gender have shown that while very imperfectly documented, women did obtain some agency, for instance by applying to the qadi's court for a share in the inheritance of a parent, or negotiating a divorce from an undesirable spouse. Certain females managed to do this, although their access to written culture was limited and they should have been virtually invisible in the public arena, at least if local administrators had been able to enforce every sultanic decree. Particularly in the Arab provinces, which mostly remain outside of consideration here, women

from elite families might have a significant input when it came to forming marriage alliances and transferring elite status from one generation to the next. At certain times and in certain places, women appear as textile workers; wealthier women appear as consumers of valuable goods such as the fine muslin and colourful striped fabrics adorning Menekşe Tuti.

On the other hand, peasant labour has not received much attention in recent years, now that the impetus given by Marxian social science to historiography during the 1970s has largely spent itself. Moreover, even among historians to some extent inspired by Marx's ideas, the formation of states/empires and the proper placement of Ottoman state and society in one of the 'modes of production' available in Marx's thinking have been of more concern than problems related to practical agriculture and everyday life. The scarcity of sources has only exacerbated this unfortunate tendency. Yet peasants produced not only the foods and raw materials sustaining urban dwellers, both elite and non-elite, they also manufactured a variety of craft goods, by which they attempted to supply their own needs and those of their fellow villagers, earn the money required for taxes, and, at least in good years, finance some purchases in the urban market. Moreover, as the image drawn by von Stackelberg has shown, in the rural world, women did their share of productive labour, although presumably the goods they manufactured were marketed mainly by men.

As for the urban world, the relatively elaborate weight which we have shown probably belonged to a merchant of means; for itinerant greengrocers or yoghurt-sellers may well have used a stone with the required weight or an ordinary pot holding the volume of bulgur wheat, chestnuts or barley corresponding to a half-*kile* and its subdivisions. In addition there were transactions without proper weighing and measuring: when janissaries stopped market gardeners on their way to town and took away their firewood or vegetables for a pittance, the transaction probably took place without determining the exact quantities involved.⁶⁴ In a world where masterless soldiers roamed the countryside in search of employment, both sides to a commercial transaction were probably pleased if they could buy or sell goods which had been properly weighed or measured.

'Ordinary' prisoners turned into slaves, rendering menial services to their masters or mistresses. They appear but rarely in pictures; and thus the janissary with his captive is a precious find, although the inscription remains enigmatic. In consequence, we do not know who commissioned the plate and for what purpose. However, as a mental exercise, we can construct a few hypothetical scenarios: firstly a Greek-speaking janissary, of local origin, and stationed in some fortress in the Peloponnese or the island of Crete, may have wanted a memento of the prisoner that he had

taken. Secondly, a local dignitary using *primekrous/pirimikiür* as his title may have been instrumental in negotiating the release of a foreign Christian prisoner and ordered the plate to commemorate his charitable deed. Or we may even imagine that the ex-prisoner, after obtaining his freedom, may have commissioned the plate as a present for the *Primekrous*, so as to show his gratitude. The possibilities are almost endless. In any case, the image shows a confrontation between a Muslim and a foreign Christian, with an Orthodox person also involved, perhaps in some mediating role.

Such cohabitation of people from the three monotheistic religions, namely Islam, Judaism and Christianity in its different denominations, will occupy us in the following chapter, in which we will focus on the manner in which the relevant commands of sultans and viziers worked themselves out 'on the ground'.

CHAPTER 4

A WORLD OF THREE RELIGIONS: OTTOMAN CONQUESTS AND THE NON-MUSLIM POPULATION

From the mid-fourteenth century onward the Ottoman polity, originally a small principality ruling Bursa and İznik, expanded into the Balkans; by that time north-western Anatolia was largely – though by no means totally – Muslim; and the pious foundations of Sultan Orhan (r. 1324–62) must have contributed to the spread of Islam in this region. On the whole, conquests in the Balkans were far more rapid than in Anatolia; thus the fact that in south-eastern Europe most of the local population was Christian did not impede the stabilization of the sultans' rule. Had matters been different, the defeat of Bayezid I (r. 1389–1402) at the hands of Timur in 1402 and the following long war between the sultan's four sons should have led to the collapse of Ottoman rule in south-eastern Europe, which manifestly was not the case.¹

In certain parts of the Balkan Peninsula, the conquest was the starting point for a significant immigration of Muslims, particularly nomads and semi-nomads that, for reasons impossible to reconstruct today, soon lost their tribal structures and accepted service as auxiliaries to the Ottoman army.² In some areas, dervishes settled and promoted the Islamization of the local population, a process continuing through the seventeenth century.³ Bosnians accepted Islam shortly after the Ottoman conquest in the 1400s and, in some cases, even earlier, while the Islamization of Albania occurred mainly in the 1600s. But already a century earlier, in the early 1500s, the eastern section of what is today Bulgaria had mainly Muslim inhabitants.⁴

In part, these Ottoman successes must have been due to the fact that the relatively centralized system of rule characterizing the empire from the late fifteenth to the early seventeenth century limited the incidence of

local violence, for instance between rival power-holders, to which peasants so often fell victim. Moreover, a centralized and comparatively disciplined administration must have resulted in fewer taxation-related abuses. Furthermore even if the rights enjoyed by Ottoman subjects – especially the peasants among them – were quite limited, these people were still in an advantageous position when compared to the situation of many central European serfs. Furthermore probably in the 1300s and certainly in the fifteenth century, the sultans' officials were concerned about integrating the populations of their newly conquered territories into an expanding empire; and this policy opened up perspectives for certain Christians as well. Thus petty Balkan aristocrats might become holders of military tax assignments (*timar*) without needing to convert to Islam, at least not immediately.⁵ Garrison and irregular soldiers also might remain Christians. Heath Lowry has suggested that this policy of accommodation (*istimalet*) continued until the conquest of Egypt and Syria in 1516–17. Afterwards, the criticism of men of religion from the central Islamic lands, whose allegiance the sultans also wished and needed to gain, resulted in a less favourable policy toward local Christians.⁶

Muslim and non-Muslim notables: power and material culture

From the late seventeenth century onwards – and in some places, even earlier – the Ottoman administration relied increasingly on the services of local notables, who had often made their fortunes through tax farming and the distribution of taxes assessed en bloc, among villages and individual families.⁷ When starting in 1695, members of the governmental elite could acquire certain tax farms on a lifetime basis (*malikâne*), this new arrangement much empowered these personages (see also Chapter 2).⁸ Short-term tax farms had also been accessible to wealthy Christians and Jews, at least in the 1400s and 1500s; but to bid for a lifetime tax farm, it was necessary to be a Muslim and a member of the governing elite as well.

Since, however, many lifetime tax farmers lived in Istanbul and did not run their provincial holdings in person, they needed intermediaries, who were ordinary tax farmers (*mültezim*); and some of the latter might well be Christians or more rarely Jews.⁹ In those areas where significant numbers of Christians continued to live, particularly in the Balkans and on certain Mediterranean islands, Orthodox notables, often known as *kocabaşıs*, undertook this kind of mediation. Sometimes these adjunct tax farmers also engaged in trade; or else commercial wealth previously acquired might allow them to participate in the tax-farming business. Similarly lifetime tax farmers had to provide guarantors and often found them among the money-changers/bankers (*sarrafs*) who frequently were

Armenians. In the eighteenth-century Peloponnese, a province to which the Ottoman administration had allowed a degree of self-government, Muslim and Christian notables were often in vehement competition over taxation rights. But when notables formed coalitions for such purposes, they sought out their allies according to interests converging in the short term, and not necessarily according to religion.¹⁰

In terms of material culture, these alliances and hostilities are of some relevance, as the houses and/or furnishings belonging to a few notables both Muslim and Christian have survived to the present day. These items demonstrate the wealth that such people might accumulate, irrespective of religion: in Damascus there were palatial dwellings typically belonging to Muslims; but in Aleppo or even the outlying Thessalian township of Ambelakia, well-to-do Christians also sponsored ornate buildings. By the seventeenth century, if not earlier, wealthy non-Muslims had adopted the domestic styles current among the Muslim elite, as apparent from the 'Aleppo room' in the Berlin Museum of Islamic Art, created in the early 1600s. The latter featured Christian imagery, but within decorative frames that would also have been appropriate in a Muslim dwelling.¹¹ The reception rooms of Orthodox notables and merchants from today's northern Greece, dated to the middle and later 1700s, also resembled those owned by well-to-do Muslims in western Anatolia.¹² As a seventeenth-century observer once put it, when it came to domestic culture, Christians and Jews imitated Muslims, coming 'as near as they dare[d]'.¹³

At times a concern about the reactions of Muslim visitors perhaps determined the kinds of images that a Christian might select for his reception chamber. Thus a study of the Berlin 'Aleppo room' has shown that the owner Isa b. Butrus, a prosperous merchant and commercial agent, certainly commissioned specifically Christian imagery. But he preferred scenes from the Old and New Testaments, like the sacrifice of Abraham's son or else Mary and her child, which were not objectionable to Muslims and appeared in illustrated Islamic manuscripts as well. On the other hand, he avoided scenes central to Christian belief but likely to scandalize Muslim visitors, such as the Crucifixion or the Resurrection. But as we have no statement of Isa's intentions, we do not know whether our interpretation of his choices is at all appropriate.¹⁴

Muslims and non-Muslims typically lived in separate town quarters; but there were exceptions to this rule, especially in Ankara.¹⁵ However, non-Muslims always had to reckon with the possibility that a sultan might insist on stricter separation, or a man of religion complain about scanty attendance at a local mosque because the neighbourhood was non-Muslim. In such situations Christians/Jews might have to sell their houses

and move; and presumably, such hurried sales allowed some astute people to 'make a killing' in real estate.

Even so, in certain places and periods, rich people seem to have favoured summer houses in suburban locations without too much regard for the fact that people of a different faith lived close by. Thus when acquiring such a residence in the suburb of Ortaköy on the Bosphorus became a sign of distinction among the well-to-do inhabitants of Istanbul, residents included both Muslims and Jews.¹⁶ By the early 1800s, there were sections of the Bosphorus shore where rich Christians had built their seaside villas, and a few Jews were present as well, while the houses of prominent Muslims were but a short distance away.¹⁷

The Jews: a special situation

The Jewish communities of the shrinking Byzantine polity had been quite small; and due to the attempts of Mehmed the Conqueror to repopulate post-1453 Istanbul, Greek-speaking (Romanipote) Jews were concentrated in the capital. However, when the Spanish and later the Portuguese kings drove the Jews out of the Iberian Peninsula, a sizeable number of refugees came to settle in the Ottoman lands, mainly in Salonika and Istanbul, but by the 1600s also in Izmir. Furthermore the sultans did not prevent pious Jews from establishing their households in Jerusalem, although the latter was a Muslim town.

Apart from their skills in the manufacture of woollen cloth, the Jewish immigrants from Spain were attractive to the sultans' government because of the commercial and diplomatic contacts that certain elite Jews might bring with them. In addition, at least in the late sixteenth and very early seventeenth century, some tax farmers were recruited from among wealthy Jews; however, these businessmen soon lost out against Ottoman military figures. In consequence by the 1600s and 1700s, Ottoman Jewish communities were often poor and lacked the intercultural connections that had characterized at least the elites during the sixteenth century.¹⁸

In recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in the history of Sabbatai Zevi (1626–76), who claimed to be the Jewish Messiah; faced with a choice between execution and conversion to Islam, Sabbatai chose the latter and became Mehmed Efendi, a move that quite a few of his followers chose to emulate. The result was a group known as the Dönme or Sabbataians, who officially lived as Muslims but continued to practise Jewish customs at home. On the one hand, the conversion of Sabbatai has been studied in the context of conversions to Islam as promoted by Sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1648–87) and his close advisors. On the other hand, attention has focused on Sabbatai's adherents who formed a compact

group mainly in Salonika; but much of this work concerns the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century and thus exceeds the limits of this study.¹⁹

Places of worship

From our present perspective, it is important to retain that while the Ottoman ruling group always assumed that Muslims were 'first-class' and non-Muslims 'second-class' subjects, the latter had more scope for self-expression through artefacts than scholars had been willing to accept before the groundbreaking work of Machiel Kiel.²⁰ Especially in outlying areas, Orthodox churches might be highly decorated: thus in the mid 1500s, the monastery of the Transfiguration of Christ, part of the monastic assemblage known as the Meteora in today's north-central Greece, ornamented its church with spectacular wall paintings extant today.²¹ In Athens too, there were quite a few churches and monasteries founded under Ottoman domination. In principle, the sultans' officials enforced Islamic law forbidding the construction of new churches and synagogues; but, in practice, concessions were sometimes possible. For instance when the government ordered the wholesale transferral of populations, which might affect Muslims, Christians, and Jews, resettled non-Muslims could build new sites of worship, although we cannot easily reconstruct the ways and means by which they received the necessary permissions. Also when churches were converted into mosques, not a rare occurrence, the previous congregations could find replacements, albeit of modest size and little architectural pretension. Thus while Istanbul contains only a single Byzantine church still in use for Orthodox religious services, between 1453 and the mid nineteenth century so many churches were built that an entire monograph now catalogues these structures.²² In matters of this kind, pragmatism usually carried the day.²³

Moreover, in terms of architectural structure, certain similarities between mosques and Byzantine-style churches strike the eye. After all, many mosques in Istanbul and the Balkans had in fact started life as churches, with Hagia Sophia/Aya Sofya in Constantinople/Istanbul the most prominent example. Often the Ottoman Muslims who sponsored the transformations of churches into mosques made only limited adjustments to the building fabric: the addition of a niche orienting the faithful toward Mecca (*mihrap*) and an elevated chair for the preacher if the building functioned as a Friday mosque (*minber*) were the most obvious changes. A minaret indicated the building's new role; and mosaics and paintings were covered over, although some congregations were in no

great hurry to do this. Thus early twentieth-century photographs of the Kariye Camii in Istanbul (formerly Our Saviour and/or the Virgin Mary in Chora) still showed some of the Byzantine decoration, although by that time, the building had long been a mosque.²⁴

Calligraphy, printing and manuscript cultures

When a former church became a mosque, the patron sponsoring the transformation often had an inscription in ornate calligraphy advertise the fact. The high status of calligraphy was connected to the fact that the Qu'ran is a written text and calligraphy thus the outer form in which God's word appears before the reader.²⁵ Therefore the calligrapher's role was directly connected to the realm of religion and he was thus a more prestigious figure than, for instance, a painter of miniatures. It is noteworthy that Evliya Çelebi, certainly an art lover, does not seem to have known the names of many painters, apart from some semi-mythical figures. But he was well aware of the merits of – for instance – Hasan Çelebi Karahisarî as a calligrapher, as the latter's name occurs twice in the first volume of his travelogue.²⁶

Architectural ornamentation apart, calligraphy decorated manuscripts and also objects in daily use. Otherwise, plants and abstract designs were the only universally acceptable forms of ornament. After all, at least in religious contexts, images of people and animals were not permitted; and whether they might be tolerated outside this realm was a disputed matter. Ottoman book lovers, therefore, were particularly interested in works featuring fine calligraphy.

The Jews had printed books ever since their arrival in the Ottoman lands; however, in the eyes of authors and publishers, only religious texts deserved to be printed; and, as a result, very little remains of the secular pieces that some writers must have produced. Uniquely there survives a sixteenth-century collection of Jewish hymns, for which the author had selected Ottoman melodies; to indicate which melody was to go with which hymn, he made sure that the first line of every hymn had an acoustic resemblance to the Ottoman song at issue.²⁷

By contrast, before the early 1700s, texts in Ottoman Turkish were always copied by hand; and even after İbrahim Müteferrika (c. 1670/74–1745) had instituted the first printing press with the support of the grand vizier Damad İbrahim Paşa (d. 1730), commercial success remained elusive. At this time Ottoman customers mainly demanded religious works, which the new press was not authorized to produce; nor could the publisher make money by printing news-sheets, another source of profit for early printers in Latinate Europe. Moreover, the process was costly, as

many inputs indispensable to the printers were imports. However, İbrahim Müteferrika kept his press going by printing texts in European languages as well; and when he died, his assets by far surpassed his debts.²⁸ He may also have had patrons about whom we know nothing, perhaps even the sultans of the time. In the later 1700s the Imperial School of Land-based Engineering (Mühendishane-i Berr-i Hümayun) took over İbrahim Müteferrika's abandoned press and printed textbooks for student use; but only in the mid-1800s, toward the end of the period treated here, did printing really come into its own.²⁹

In the sixteenth century, printed books in Greek often arrived in the Ottoman Empire from Venice; the efforts of the Orthodox patriarch Cyril Lucaris (1572–1638) to establish a Greek printing press in Istanbul failed, partly due to international intrigues.³⁰ In addition, apparently, quite a few representatives of the Orthodox Church had strong reservations about printing, which they associated with Latin missionaries, and also against the use of the vernacular in writing, apart from simple didactic texts intended for laypeople.³¹

Thus it was Venetian publishers who produced scholarly editions of authors writing in classical Greek for a strictly limited number of readers, and also shorter texts intended for a less well-educated public. But in the 1500s, even these latter volumes were not widely known in south-eastern Europe.³²

History and historiography interested only a few members of the Christian elites of the Ottoman world of the 1500s and 1600s; and the books which these people read were more often locally copied manuscripts than printed works.³³ By the second half of the seventeenth century, however, the patronage of the princes governing Wallachia and especially Moldavia under Ottoman suzerainty helped to further interest in classical texts, Greek philology and historical writing; as a result, the demand for printed texts increased. In these realms, both Church Slavonic and Romanian were in use for historiography 'in a new key', the latter a novelty that soon became popular.³⁴ In the course of the 1600s, Church Slavonic lost much of its previous importance; and now texts in Greek provided the models serving the emergent literary language of Romanian, especially with respect to vocabulary.³⁵

In the early 1700s the Moldavian nobleman Dimitrie Cantemir (1673–1723) was also familiar with Latin. Twice – briefly – prince of his homeland, Cantemir wrote several historical works, including the well-known *History of the Growth and Decay of the Ottoman Empire*, published in an English translation in London after the author's death (1734). While Cantemir was a figure of international intellectual stature and reputation, his works 'arrived' in his homeland only much later on: the

Latin original of his Ottoman history even remained unknown until the late twentieth century.³⁶

Apart from their official roles as judges and professors, Muslim religious scholars were also important producers of written texts. Outlooks varied widely: while some scholars were only interested in divinity and law, others might also develop scientific concerns. Thus Ebu Sehil Nu'man Efendi, who seems to have ended his life as the qadi of Manisa (1755), had also studied land measurement and, at a pinch, could improvise the instruments needed for this purpose.³⁷ The chronicler and medical man Şânizâde (c. 1770–1826), who at one time was qadi of Eyüp, combined medical training at the Süleymaniye *medrese* with the study of engineering.³⁸ It is therefore not reasonable to assume that *all* people with religious training were of necessity more conservative than those with a courtly upbringing; in this field, as in others, we must take individual preferences and characters into account.

The question of conversions

This thorny issue has been the subject of much debate, and the present brief introduction can do no more than scratch the surface. Conversions to Islam were numerous throughout the period under discussion, especially in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. In certain provinces, particularly in Bosnia but also on the island of Crete, a sizeable share of the population converted to Islam shortly after the Ottoman conquest. By contrast, in Albania Islamization occurred only some 200 years after the area had finally entered the sultans' realm. Scholars have attempted to explain these varied situations, by the collapse of Christian church hierarchies and the disillusionment that some people must have felt when confronted with the endless disputes between Orthodox, Catholics and – in some regions – Protestants. In certain places, the missionary activities of dervish orders must have induced conversions as well. As for people with a limited religious commitment, they probably appreciated that the convert would be exempt from the head tax that only non-Muslims needed to pay. In addition they may have wished to advance from the status of 'second-class subject', for which accepting Islam was a prerequisite. Some non-Muslim women converted because, as a result, they could get rid of an unwelcome husband; for after all, a Muslim woman could not be married to a non-Muslim. But if, to her misfortune, her husband decided to convert as well, such a woman might well have found that her hoped-for freedom was only an illusion.

In addition to local converts, there were also people who came to the Ottoman Empire from Italy or central Europe, because of religious

persecution or other reasons, and converted to Islam upon arrival. One of these volunteers was the Transylvanian scholar İbrahim Müteferrika, whom we have encountered as a pioneer printer; as his Christian name remains unknown, the assumption that he was a Unitarian, fleeing from the Habsburg-promoted attempt to impose Catholicism, is plausible but unproven.³⁹ Another example, recently become quite famous, concerned Beatrice, the sister of Gazanfer Ağa (d. 1603), a powerful Ottoman courtier of Venetian antecedents. Beatrice joined her brother in Istanbul and converted: as Fatma Hatun, she was rid of her unsatisfactory husband and could contract a new marriage.⁴⁰ Cases of monks and friars converting to Islam are also on record, one of them the associate of – and translator for – the geographer, chronicle writer and bibliographer Kâtip Çelebi (1609–57).⁴¹

In these instances, people accepted Islam of their own volition. Other cases were more ambiguous: slaves might become Muslims because they hoped to increase their chances of manumission; but they might simply have been ordered to do so by their masters. Not much choice was available to the young men entering the service of the sultans because they had been drafted through the levy of boys (*devşirme*); the latter routinely became Muslims. We may also assume that some unplanned conversions took place after parties among young usually non-elite men, when a Christian party-goer might be placed in a compromising situation from which he disentangled himself by conversion. Such cases sometimes entered the record because, at a later stage, the new Muslim regretted his decision and wished to return to his previous faith.⁴² In this situation certain Orthodox clergymen, whom Tijana Krstić has called the ‘impresarios’ of the neomartyrs, only offered one option: the convert was to go to the place where he had first changed his religion and publicly proclaim his return to Christianity. According to Islamic law, he would then suffer the death penalty, often after the qadi had tried everything in his power to avert such an outcome; this sequence is the backbone of all stories concerning ‘neomartyrs’. Presumably some unwilling converts, at least those with a degree of mobility, avoided such extreme situations by emigration to a Christian country.

Communication between members of different religions

It was with problems of this type in mind that Orthodox men of religion advised their congregations to avoid contacts with Muslims; and conversely, quite a few Muslims wished to have as little to do with non-Muslims as possible.⁴³ However, members of different religions needed to communicate – at the very least – when they did business, be

it of a political or a commercial kind. A few recent studies have shown how such communication might come about. Presumably it was mostly the non-Muslims that, being in the weaker position, made an effort to establish a dialogue.

Down to the present day, we have not found much evidence of contacts between Muslim and Christian scholars, at least not in Istanbul or the Balkans. Thus Orthodox authors, who produced chronicles including the events of their own time, that is the Ottoman period, rarely used sources written in Turkish. As an exception proving the rule, recent scholarship has unearthed two illustrated books perhaps partly inspired by Ottoman genealogies of sultans.⁴⁴ But some evidence for scholarly interfaith contacts, for instance in the natural sciences and especially map-making, may well emerge in the future.

In Egypt, by contrast, there was, at least in the eighteenth century, a certain amount of exchange between Muslim and Coptic scholars and artists, the latter often fluent in Arabic. Thus for example the Coptic Christian Ibrāhīm al-Nāsih was an acknowledged expert in the arts of the book, with a reputation among his Muslim colleagues as well.⁴⁵

Medicine was a discipline in which a few Jews and Christian specialists might rise to prominence, and as a result establish contacts with members of the central elite. Thus in the 1400s and 1500s, several Jewish palace doctors were not only medical experts but also negotiated with European polities, particularly Venice. However, by the seventeenth century, the palace only retained the services of those doctors who accepted conversion to Islam. But high dignitaries might take a different view: Alexander Mavrocordatos (1636–1709), who had studied medicine in Italy, became a confidant of the grand vizier Kara Mustafa Paşa, for whom he also worked as a translator during the second siege of Vienna in 1683. Fluent in Latin, Mavrocordatos sometimes negotiated with Habsburg representatives on behalf of the sultan, his son reaching the coveted position of chief dragoman.⁴⁶

After the defection of Dimitrie Cantemir to Tsar Peter I (r. 1682–1725) in 1711, the Ottoman sultans no longer appointed local noblemen to govern the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia in their names, instead preferring prominent Greeks resident in the Istanbul district of Fener/Phanar. Always selected from a small number of families, these governors were known as Phanariots (in Ottoman, Fener Beyleri). The power of these small-scale dynasties (*hanedan*) and the closeness of certain of their members to the Ottoman ruling group continued until the Greek uprising of 1821, in which certain Phanariots played a leading role on the side of the rebels. To this unexpected defection, the Ottoman government responded with a series of executions, sometimes of people not necessarily

involved in the rebellion, but who had had the misfortune to come to the notice of Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) and his advisors at the wrong moment.⁴⁷ Even so, some figures from this milieu, such as Stephanos Vogorides/İstefanaki Bey (1775/1780–1859) managed to preserve an, albeit unofficial, role in Ottoman politics. In a text known as his *Apologia*, Vogorides defended his refusal to go over to the rebels and/or flee to Russia by his sense of duty and loyalty, stating that if the deity had intended him to be a Russian he surely would have been born in Russia.⁴⁸

On a less elevated level, brokers and other people who earned their living by mediating between members of different faiths and cultures might find ‘common ground’ on the linguistic level. In a letter written in seventeenth-century Ottoman Turkish and preserved in the Venetian archives, we find an agent protesting his probity vis-à-vis a probably irate customer by using plenty of religious references, but of a kind that the adherents of any monotheistic faith might find acceptable.⁴⁹ At present we still have too few such cases in hand to draw any conclusions about the possible existence of an intra-religious culture of honesty and respectability. But the phenomenon is intriguing nevertheless.

(PLATE 16) ASSERTING SUNNI IDENTITY THROUGH A
CALLIGRAPHIC PANEL

Though important in interfaith relations, religious doubts, loyalty, or a concern about respectability have not left many traces in material culture; and we now must turn to considerations connected with religion that did find reflection in tangible objects. We will begin with a tile panel featuring, in the centre and most prominently visible, the words ‘Allah’ and ‘Muhammad’. In the lower left-hand corner, we clearly see the ‘Abū’ of ‘Abū Bakr’ (r. 632–34), the name of the first successor to the Prophet Muhammad and thus the first Caliph. As for the second part of the name, we have to piece it together: the letter *be* of ‘Abū’ does duty for a second time, while the *kef* stretches out parallel to the lower margins, with the *re* attached to it and filling the lower right-hand corner of the inscription.

On the right-hand side of the panel, the most immediately legible name is that of ‘Uthmān’, the third Caliph (r. 644–55). But a closer look reveals that the ‘*ayn*’ with which the name ‘Uthmān’ begins also serves as the first letter for the name of the second Caliph ‘Umar b. al-Khattāb’ (r. 634–44), while the *re* does double duty too, uniting the names of the first and second successors to the Prophet. As for the name of the fourth Caliph ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib’ (r. 656–60), discerning it takes somewhat more imagination; yet the ‘*ayn*’ is the very same letter that begins the names of ‘Umar’ and

‘Uthmān’, while the *elif* of the latter’s name can also be read as a *lam* with the *ya* attached. Perhaps the prominence of the name of ‘Uthmān’ (in Turkish, Osman) is not due to chance, given the fact that this was also the name of the eponymous founder of the Ottoman dynasty.

The designer has pretended that the letters, in reality painted on faience, were of paper and had been glued to the blue surface making up the background of the tile; for as apparent only in an enlargement, the calligrapher has ‘cut’ some of the letters in certain places so as to allow the reader to discern the different words with relative ease. As for the *nun* that forms the last letter of the word ‘Uthmān’ the designer has even pretended to cut a hole in the paper so as to permit the passage of another letter. Presumably he and other calligraphers of the time drew their inspiration from the paper cut-outs known as *kat’i* that as a recent study has shown both in Iran and the Ottoman Empire, served mainly for the rendering of calligraphy in manuscripts, but occasionally also for images.⁵⁰

A technique that Ottoman artists had taken over from the mediaeval Iranian world – in which Shi’ites were as yet a minority – could thus be employed in the assertion of Sunni identity. After all, the Ottoman sultans were committed Sunnis and, as such, revered all four early caliphs as rightly guided. By contrast, from early Islamic times onward, there was a party claiming that only members of the family of the Prophet Muhammad could legitimately become caliphs. These people, called Shi’ites, regarded the first three successors to the Prophet as usurpers, with ‘Umar b. al-Khattāb singled out for particular opprobrium. After Shah Ismā‘īl I (r. 1501–24) had declared Shi’ism the state religion in his newly conquered Iranian Empire, the divergence between Sunnis and Shi’ites became a serious political issue. Sunni Iranian scholars and military men unwilling to change their allegiance often migrated to the Ottoman Empire, where those with a good literary education had reasonable chances of obtaining positions in the governing apparatus. Local men annoyed by this competition occasionally cast doubt on the loyalty of the new arrivals to the Ottoman dynasty.⁵¹

In the heat of the conflict between sultan and shah, certain Ottoman religious scholars even claimed that Iranian Shi’ites were so heretical that they no longer deserved to be called Muslims; this was for instance the opinion of Ebu’s-Su‘ud (1490–1574), the famous head of the scholarly-cum-religious establishment under Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520–66).⁵² A major bone of contention was the custom, instituted by the Safavids, to publicly revile the first two caliphs and sometimes ‘Aysha bint Abī Bakr, a favourite wife of the Prophet, as well. Thus in the Peace of Amasya, concluded in 1555, the Safavid Shah had to promise that he would have this practice discontinued.⁵³

However, tensions over Shi'ite ritual did not abate: while Evliya Çelebi was normally no fanatic, when visiting Urmiya/Rumiyte in western Iran, he and his entourage felt so provoked by the mention of 'Alī as the saint of Allah, which forms part of the Shi'ite call to prayer, that he had a muezzin beaten up and ducked in a pond. Evliya also claimed to have told the unfortunate man to invoke Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān.⁵⁴ Moreover, when describing the mausoleum and sanctuary of 'Alī the fourth Caliph in Karbala, which Evliya certainly regarded as a holy place, he still made acid comments on what he regarded as the 'exaggerations of the Persians', who supposedly liked to assume that Muhammad had become the last prophet only because of a mistake on the part of the angel Gabriel; for it was 'Alī who really should have acceded to that dignity.⁵⁵

While we do not know where our inscription was first located, who commissioned it and where it was designed and ultimately painted, it does bear the date of 1139/1727. This was the year in which the Ottoman Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) made peace with Ashraf, the Afghan ruler who had recently toppled the Safavids; Ahmed III had used this occasion to conquer Tabriz (held 1725–29).⁵⁶ However, the peace which granted the Ottomans possession of this city was of very short duration, as already in 1729 the commander Nādir, shortly to become Nādir Shāh, retrieved the city for Iran. Perhaps the tile that concerns us here had some connection with the renewed Ottoman presence in north-western Iran and the concomitant assertion of Sunni identity. But this is no more than an assumption.

(PLATE 17) SILVER FROM AN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Objects with religious significance for Christians will form our next topic; as most Christian subjects of the sultans were Orthodox, the item first to be discussed comes from this church. In the Ottoman world, the eighteenth century saw the rise of Orthodox merchants, who, if educated, usually were grecophone although not necessarily ethnic Greeks. These people traded in Trieste, Vienna, the Hungarian town of Buda that recently had become a Habsburg possession, and even the fairs of Leipzig.⁵⁷ In the late 1700s, the new Russian town of Odessa was also a favoured trading centre. Once successful, some of these merchants founded schools in which young Greek intellectuals might teach, thus breaking the ecclesiastical monopoly over education.

But people with limited amounts of extra money were more likely to make donations to their local church; and silver plate was especially popular. The liturgy required chalices and patens, to hold the wine and bread consecrated during mass. Patens, moreover, were also in use for bread that had been blessed but not consecrated.⁵⁸ Such precious items

enhanced religious services; but being small and portable, they were not so likely to arouse the ire of local Muslims, who might have objected to ostentatious buildings or wall paintings. In terms of style, the donors of silver plate favoured current fashions, and thus did not always adhere to Byzantine traditions. In the 1600s, decorations might reflect Italian late-Renaissance and particularly early Baroque styles, the latter preferred by some donors well into the 1800s. In the second half of the eighteenth century, neoclassical designs came to be in vogue (see Chapter 3). This style was full of references to Greek antiquity, and thus educated patrons could regard it as part of 'their own' heritage, an aspect becoming relevant after the emergence of nationalist movements during the 1800s.⁵⁹ Remarkably, some of the decorative elements may have been inspired by contemporary French silverware.⁶⁰

For the social historian, these pious gifts are of special interest because of the inscriptions that they often feature. If the donors are individuals, their names may occur in other sources as well, and their donations may indicate the patrons' sense of belonging to a given church and locality, perhaps well after trade or other concerns had made these men settle in distant places. Even more precious is the information we may glean from inscriptions mentioning guilds as donors; for our information on provincial artisans is very sparse, and quite a few guilds that had mainly or only non-Muslim members do not seem to occur in Ottoman official documents at all.⁶¹

Unfortunately, the inscription on the plate under consideration here does not mention the donor. But it does tell us that the work is dated to 1716 and had once belonged to the cathedral church of the bishopric of Bursa, defunct since 1923.⁶² The patron saint was St John the Evangelist, known to the Orthodox as the Theologian.

The plate shows a scene involving St John that does not much occur in Western artwork, namely the saint accompanied by an amanuensis. In the Orthodox tradition, the latter is known as St Prochoros, whose name appears but once in the Acts of the Apostles. On the website of the monastery of St John the Theologian on Patmos, we find a statement that in the monastery library, there is a sixth-century source claiming that St Prochoros was a disciple of St John, who like his master spread Christianity in Ephesus and ended his life in Nicomedia, today's İzmit. Tradition claims that he aided St John in writing down the Apocalypse (or Book of Revelation); but some images show St Prochoros working on the gospel bearing the name of St John. As the author of the account on the monastery website admits, information about the saint is minimal. In Bursa, St Prochoros would thus have been venerated as a local saint; but there are depictions of the master and his disciple in other places as well.

In fact, an eighteenth-century wall painting, shown on the Patmos monastery's website, allows us to contextualize the roughly rectangular item directly under the feet of the eagle in the centre of the Bursa plate. In the more detailed wall painting visible on the website, this is a basket filled with papyrus rolls. However, in the smaller depiction on the Bursa plate, this item seems to have mutated into a book; and St Prochoros too apparently is not working on a roll, but on a single page. Depicting volumes rather than rolled papyri makes good sense; for, after all, the transition from roll to book has often been associated with the spread of Christian religious writing.

We do not know the place of manufacture; but as St Prochoros was a saint who supposedly lived and died in western Anatolia, and the plate was the property of the Bursa church, we may hypothesize that a silversmith from the region in the wider sense of the word – including Istanbul – had been commissioned.⁶³ If so, this work would be somewhat unusual among the items studied here; for it is not the product of wide-ranging comings and goings but very much 'rooted' in western Anatolia and the Marmara region. But it would be a mistake to assume that *all* items of some value were necessarily the product of long-distance contacts; it just so happens that the present study focuses on widely travelled objects.

(PLATE 18) A PIECE OF TEXTILE, PROBABLY FOR USE IN AN
ARMENIAN CHURCH

Ritual goods including textiles once used in Istanbul's churches have in recent years attracted considerable attention; and it is in this context that the item presented here has been published as well.⁶⁴ It is a piece of blue silk with embroidery, much of it in gold thread. Four columns wound in spirals occupy centre stage, spiral columns being a prestigious motif since late antiquity. Decorated with roses, they bear an arch, on top of which there is a crown-like motif made up of acanthus leaves. A garland of flowers, mostly roses, surrounds the four sides of the textile, bordered by a gold-coloured fringe completely framing the design. A lamp hangs down from the cusp of the arch, nearly touching a bouquet of flowers in a golden vase placed near the bottom of the composition.

This textile bears the date of 1821; but the latter is not visible on the photograph and neither is it possible to see the Armenian inscription which says that the 'seventh [or perhaps: third] choir of the Church of Surp Astvazadzin' donated this item to the Church of Surp Nişan. The catalogue authored by Hülya Bilgi and İdil Zambak tells us that the inscription was merely drawn but not embroidered; thus we may wonder whether the donation ever took place.⁶⁵ Today, there is a church of Surp

Nişan in Kartal, on the outskirts of Istanbul, which was renovated in the eighteenth century; but we do not know whether that was the church intended by the inscription. As for Surp Astvadzadzin, or the Holy Mother of God, this is the name of the Armenian patriarchal church in Kumkapı, Istanbul. But once again, many churches share this dedication.

Quite obviously, the item at issue strongly resembles Muslim prayer mats.⁶⁶ Even the fringe surrounding the textile on all four edges recurs in pieces which must have served Muslim prayers. But there are other textiles with similar designs clearly used in Armenian churches: one such item, described as a curtain covering a niche, is in the possession of the Armenian Patriarchate in Kumkapı.⁶⁷ This latter textile features two columns holding up an acanthus bush and a garland of flowers decorating the four sides; it was originally intended for the church of Surp Astvadzadzin in the settlements of Evereg and Fenesse, today part of the town of Develi (in early Ottoman sources called Zengibar) in the Kayseri area.⁶⁸ Here the inscription naming the individuals commemorated also gives us a date, namely 1818. The two textiles are thus almost contemporaneous; unfortunately we do not know where they had been embroidered, whether in Istanbul or else in the vicinity of Kayseri.

Wherever it may have been made, the curtain results from multiple contacts: first of all, the design of Islamic textiles being well known to Armenian embroiderers, the patron or patrons who ordered the blue silk for Surp Nişan must have drawn inspiration from Islamic rugs, coming 'as near as they dare[d]', as Paul Rychaut had noted earlier on.⁶⁹ But at the same time, the light and airy design is also hard to imagine without rococo models. The latter seem to have found favour among other Armenian patrons and embroiderers as well, as is apparent from a chalice veil belonging to the church of St Gregory the Illuminator in the Istanbul suburb of Kuzguncuk.⁷⁰ This convergence is all the more intriguing as the small-town notables from Develi, who had commissioned the piece today in Kumkapı, probably did not realize that they stood at a point of contact between vastly different religious traditions.

(PLATE 19) A JEWISH WOMAN OF ISTANBUL

Most of the artwork connected with Ottoman Jews and surviving in private collections and public museums dates to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, a few images, made for the most part by non-Jews, record the clothing of Jewish men and women of earlier periods. These are examples of costume images, popular among European patrons from the second half of the sixteenth century onward. Especially influential was the work of Nicolas de Nicolay and his aide Louis Danet, first published in

1567, which inspired the well-known volume on European and non-European costumes by Cesare Vecellio (c. 1530–c. 1601), a younger cousin of the famous Venetian painter Tiziano Vecellio.⁷¹

Nicolas de Nicolay had not included any Jewish women in his collection of Ottoman types.⁷² By contrast George de la Chappelle (d. 1655), from the town of Caen, who in 1648 brought out a smaller selection of images, focused on Ottoman women, with a special emphasis on non-Muslims; his set included a Jewish lady of some wealth.⁷³ Similarly to de Nicolay, the artist had come to Istanbul in the suite of a French ambassador; back in France, he was the protégé of a noblewoman, to whom he dedicated his work. This personage was Madame Gillonne d'Harcourt, daughter of Jacques II d'Harcourt and, after her second marriage in 1643, countess of Fiesque; she was part of the circle of the famous letter-writer Madame de Sévigné.⁷⁴ In his dedication epistle, the artist also referred to the deceased grandmother of the dedicatee, Madame Gillonne de Matignon, whose protection he had enjoyed in the past. From the royal privilege that the author received, and that occupies the last page of his book, we learn that George de la Chappelle had gone to some expense to finance his publication; thus, he had received only limited support from the ambassador.

George de la Chappelle makes it quite clear that it was his aim to show costume, including embroideries and precious or semi-precious stones.⁷⁵ In fact he is quite critical of the images adorning the translation of Laonikos Chalkokondyles' historical work, of which he supposedly had seen an edition dating to the early 1500s. But this must have been a mistake, as the book first appeared in 1577, with many reprints in the course of the seventeenth century.⁷⁶ The costume figures in this volume are apparently identical with those in the volume authored by de Nicolay.⁷⁷

De Nicolay and Danet showed figures with little or no background; and their example was followed by many costume artists of later generations, including Jean-Baptiste Vanmour when producing the Ferriol album published in 1714.⁷⁸ By contrast, George de la Chappelle took a good deal of trouble over the background visible in his engravings, which he explained in his letter to his patroness: the first images in the series, including that of the Jewish lady discussed here (No. 3) show a sequence of somewhat stylized images of the Istanbul side of the Golden Horn, with his subjects clearly placed on the northern shore, every figure appearing before a different background. From illustration No. 4 onward, the people depicted stand in front of a different body of water, namely the Bosphorus; the relevant views are realistic enough to show that the latter's shores were not at this time densely populated. Presumably George de la Chappelle, who may have seen artwork resembling the Istanbul panorama by

Melchior Lorichs, today in Leiden University, wanted to increase the number of potential customers by offering both costume pictures and images of foreign lands.⁷⁹

The pose of the Jewish lady depicted by George de la Chappelle is quite similar to that of her Muslim counterpart in indoor dress, whose image begins the series (No. 1). However, the Jewish lady wears outdoor clothing, a long coat of a dark colour tailored to show the waistline. The wearer lifts her coat very slightly so as to make the lining visible. She wears a high headdress that we also find in costume figures depicting Muslim women; the transparent veil covering it falls down over her forehead, leaving the eyes and lower part of her face exposed. A second veil, which she has knotted under her chin, falls down along her back, seemingly reaching all the way to the ground. Her shoes could have been of interest if the image had been in colour, as sultanic commands determined the colour of the footwear permitted to non-Muslims in general and to Jews in particular. But unfortunately, the image is in black and white.

In terms of the garments depicted, there are quite significant differences between this picture and the painting included in a costume album of the late eighteenth century.⁸⁰ In the latter image, the woman's dark coat is so voluminous as to render the figure well-nigh indiscernible. While the face is once again uncovered, the veil seems to be of a rough, heavy fabric that obscures the structure of the supporting headdress much more than the veil in the earlier picture. These differences may be due to social class: the woman in the later picture may well have been much poorer than her seventeenth-century predecessor, who was visibly a lady of means; and the more advanced age of the eighteenth-century person may also have been a determining factor. In addition it is possible that fashions had changed between the mid 1600s and the late 1700s.

As for footwear, the bluish-green shoes of the woman depicted in the late-eighteenth-century image form a single speck of colour in this otherwise very sober and nearly black-and-white composition. We may wonder whether, at the time and place in question, blue shoes were prescribed for Jewish women; at certain times, Jews were supposed to use black or purple leather; and the artist may have wished to render this latter colour.⁸¹ But given our limited knowledge, there may have been other – and quite unknown – considerations involved as well.⁸²

Conclusion

This chapter has made it palpable that in spite of religious divisions, which had always been significant and perhaps became even more difficult to surmount as the seventeenth century advanced, the material world was a

sphere of interaction between Muslims, Christians and Jews. Thus to the two religious textiles decorated with arches and discussed in this chapter, one Muslim and one Christian, it is possible to add at least two Jewish items. A synagogue hanging – or perhaps a Torah curtain – belonging to the Padua Jewish Community features a similar design; the textile in question, technically a carpet, comes from mid-sixteenth-century Cairo or else Istanbul, as it features decorations typical of Mamlūk carpets together with some design elements resembling work from Bursa or Istanbul.⁸³ But the people who commissioned this curtain may well have been Italian, perhaps merchants trading between Istanbul and Venice. A slightly later but similar Torah curtain, dating to the 1600s and made in Cairo, is in the Textile Museum in Washington.⁸⁴

We do not always know how designs migrated from Cairo or Istanbul to Italy, or else from one religious community to the other within the Ottoman context. While the frontispieces of printed books may have facilitated the movement of designs featuring arches between Jewish communities located at great distances from one another, this form of diffusion is less likely where Ottoman Muslims, Orthodox and Armenians are concerned.⁸⁵ In this case we can only speculate; perhaps there were embroiderers who worked for patrons willing to hire them, with religion a secondary question; or perhaps drawings circulated in this milieu. Hopefully more information will become available in the future.

The adherents of different religions doubtless shared other concerns as well; but at the same time, religious convictions also served to legitimize warfare between rival empires; and for many people on both sides of the seventeenth-century Ottoman–Habsburg frontier, large- or small-scale warfare was *the* determining fact of life. Yet certain offensive and defensive weapons rarely if ever saw the battlefield, becoming status symbols that enhanced the prestige of their elite owners. Even more remarkably, such weapons might become suitable diplomatic gifts to dignitaries from ‘the other side’ and later on, collectors’ items. Examples of such use and reuse will be the topic of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

MAKING WAR AND PEACE: FIGHTING, GIFT-GIVING AND THE DELINEATION OF BORDERS

Polities in early modern Europe were geared toward war, and the Ottoman Empire, which, after all, encompassed south-eastern Europe and a share of central Europe as well, was no exception to the general rule. Moreover, at least down to the late 1600s, the sultan's commanders were successful in most of their enterprises, and thus had little subjective reason to doubt the advantages of warfare.¹ As one example among many, Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520–66) had forced his Habsburg opponent the Archduke Ferdinand (later Holy Roman Emperor, r. 1558–64) to pay tribute for the narrow band of Hungarian territory that the latter had obtained, after the demise of the mediaeval kingdom in 1526.²

Certainly by the mid 1500s, large-scale and rapid conquests came to an end with a relative stalemate on the Habsburg front emerging after Süleyman's death. The Long War (1593–1606), which only ended when both sides were exhausted enough to conclude the Peace of Zsitvatorok, gained the Ottomans a number of Hungarian fortresses but little else.³ As a result, the viziers, who by the mid 1600s largely governed the empire, mostly selected territories belonging to less powerful rulers as the goals of their campaigns. Thus in 1669 the Ottomans completed the conquest of Crete, a Venetian colony for some 400 years; and the empire held on to this island until 1912, with a sizeable share of the population converting to Islam over the centuries.⁴ Furthermore the commanders serving Sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1648–87) captured Podolia from the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (1672) and transformed the main church of Kamianets-Podilskyi into a mosque, although this fortress was soon lost in the peace of Karlowitz/Karlofça (1699).⁵ Remarkably, the Ottoman lands thus reached their maximum extent during the third quarter of the seventeenth century.

On the Iranian frontier as well, Ottoman campaigns were frequent before the Peace of Kasr-ı Şirin (1639) and once again in the course of the eighteenth century, after the fall of the Safavid dynasty in 1722.⁶ But in this region as well, after Sultan Süleyman's campaign that made Iraq into an Ottoman province (1534–35), permanent acquisitions were few. For Shah Abbas I (r. 1588–1629) reconquered the vast expanse of lands that the Safavids had lost to the armies of Murad III (r. 1574–95) just a few years earlier, including – perhaps most importantly – the Caucasus.⁷ In 1621 Safavid armies even occupied Baghdad, which had been in Ottoman hands for almost a century. Thus on the Iranian front the major success of the sultans during the 1600s was in reality a reconquest; for in 1638 Murad IV (r. 1623–40) once again took Baghdad, which remained an Ottoman frontier province until World War I.

The timar-holding cavalry

In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the cavalry was the core of many armies, although late mediaeval confrontations of heavily armed knights with Flemish and Swiss infantry soldiers had shown that the pre-eminence of mounted warriors was drawing to a close. Ottoman cavalymen typically received an assignment of taxes (*timar*) mostly collected from the peasantry; the latter paid dues and performed – rather limited – labour services for the *timar*-holder or *sipahi*.⁸ Most *timars* were quite small; and the sultans' administration frequently moved *timar*-holders from one location to another, so as to prevent them from putting down 'local roots'. For similar considerations, the son of a *sipahi* in principle could not inherit his father's holding, although as we have seen (compare Chapter 3) he did inherit the almost exclusive right to apply for another *timar*. Admittedly, on the Ottoman–Habsburg frontier in Hungary the sons of *sipahis* sometimes did acquire their fathers' holdings.⁹ And it was by means of the *timar*, as noted, that Ottoman sultans integrated the petty aristocrats in the Balkans that in the pre-conquest period had normally exercised local power.¹⁰

In combat zones, soldiers without a *sipahi* background might receive a *timar* as a reward for bravery. But at least in the 1500s, they could never be sure to enjoy their grants throughout their lifetimes, as the sultan might at any time order the demotion of people raised from subject (*reaya*) to military (*askeri*) status. Seemingly the Ottoman administration considered the preservation of the boundary between *askeri* and *reaya* more important than the concerns of individual soldiers or even the destructive effects upon morale when military men known in their units for special bravery lost their holdings because of their subject status.¹¹

Timar-holders also were active in local government, together with judges, administrators of lands belonging to pious foundations and, where applicable, garrison commanders (*dizdar*); these people represented the sultans' power in the provinces. On the whole, the Ottoman monarchs ran their empire with only a small body of full-time administrators; in addition *timar*-holders were often absent on campaign. Therefore the government must have counted on informal mechanisms, especially the support of what we might call, with some hesitation, the Ottoman rural gentry. Of some importance in this respect were retired judges and, once again, the administrators of the numerous pious foundations, which dotted both the Balkans and Anatolia. These men must have persuaded the locals that it was best to continue paying their taxes; for, without support, the few *sipahis* excused from campaign duties to collect dues would not have been able to do so.

However, concerning the tensions between peasants and *sipahis* our knowledge is very limited, since the vast majority of the qadis' registers, our major source for social conflicts during the early modern period, cover only the towns and say very little about rural problems.

Infantry soldiers

But the special strength of the Ottoman army lay in its infantry; and the possession of a standing army of foot soldiers already in the 1400s was an important advantage of the sultans over their European, Ak Koyunlu and later Safavid rivals. Moreover, this fighting force did not require the cooperation of tribal leaders – for tribally based armies, on which the Safavids relied at least to the end of the sixteenth century, were hard to mobilize and could easily leave the battlefield if their demands were not met. Presumably for this reason, Ottoman sultans from the sixteenth century onward placed very limited reliance on nomad contingents in the field army and largely assigned them auxiliary duties.¹²

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries this standing army was – more or less – regularly paid; furthermore this 'new army' (*yeniçeri*) a term that soon entered English as 'janissary', already wore uniforms, also a novelty for European armies of the early modern period. In the 1300s many men had entered the janissary corps as prisoners of war assigned to the sultan, who could claim one fifth of all booty; they were thus slave soldiers of the kind frequently encountered in the Islamic world during the Middle Ages. But as with time the army needed more recruits, from the fifteenth century onward the administration collected many soldiers from the Christian peasant population through the so-called *devşirme* or levy of boys (see Chapter 4).¹³ These youngsters were drafted, made to accept Islam, and

sent to Anatolian villages so as to become hard workers and good Muslims. *Devşirme* recruits were not legally slaves, although they counted as dependents of the sultan (*kul*), serving their ruler with special discipline and devotion. After basic training, quite a few of them wound up in Istanbul as candidate janissaries (*acemi oğlan*), where they were put to work on public projects and promoted to full janissary status whenever positions opened up.¹⁴

Those recruits considered especially promising received their training in the sultans' palace, where a few fortunate youths might serve the monarch as pages and later have high-profile careers in the administration or the army. A larger contingent became cavalry soldiers in the direct service of the palace. Confusingly for us, these latter military men are on record as *sipahis* just like the *timar*-holders, whose socio-political status yet was so different. From the early 1600s, however, recruitment through the levy of boys increasingly became obsolete, as many officially registered soldiers now managed to have their sons succeed them.

Janissaries originally were not to engage in crafts or commerce. But whether this rule was ever enforced is uncertain, as references to janissaries in trade date to the late fifteenth century, the first time for which documentation allows us to discern the outlines of the Ottoman military's social history. Yet in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when inflation had greatly reduced the value of the soldiers' pay, crafts and trade became a way of life for large numbers of men, whose corps thus turned from a standing army into a militia.¹⁵ In addition artisans and traders often joined the various military corps because of the protection that membership might provide. The combat value of these units declined yet further as a result. However, widespread membership in the janissaries' or gunners' corps provided one of the few venues where non-elite urban dwellers might have a say in politics, at least in cities where such militias were numerous, like Istanbul, Aleppo or Damascus.¹⁶

At least some of the janissaries lived in barracks, another Ottoman innovation that took quite some time to reach early modern Europe; and when on campaign, the soldiers spent their nights in tents. As a result, the sultans' subjects did not normally need to provide lodgings for the military in their own homes. Given the detestation with which for instance early modern Frenchmen regarded the billeting of soldiers, those subjects of the sultans who were in a position to compare should have regarded the relative separateness of army and civilians as a point in favour of their own monarchs. However, in early nineteenth-century campaigns, these rules no longer applied: and for instance during the wars of Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) against Mehmed Ali/Muhammad Ali Paşa of

Egypt, the inhabitants of Malatya were ordered to evacuate their town so as to allow the soldiers to winter in it. The townspeople had to spend the cold season in the village that was normally their summer quarters, called Aspuzu.¹⁷ When they finally returned they found that the soldiers, left without firewood, had burned many of the houses; and apparently the destruction was such that the townsmen settled permanently in Aspuzu. They renamed the new site 'Malatya'; and what they thought of this treatment remains unrecorded.

Sipahis of both categories, in addition to janissaries and other elite corps, all counted as servitors of the sultan or *askeri*; along with other employees of the central administration, they were exempted from some – though not from all – taxes and enjoyed the prestige of belonging to the ruling group.¹⁸ However, when in the late sixteenth century, Ottoman campaigns required more and more manpower, while the financial crisis of the times made payment difficult, sultans and viziers took to hiring young men from the subject class for single campaigns only. These men, known as *sarica* or *sekban* had learned how to use muskets; and presumably they often spirited away their arms at the end of the campaign. As for the units formed by these temporary soldiers, they did not necessarily disband once the campaign was over; and, given the unattractiveness of farming and village life under the climatic conditions of the Little Ice Age, many temporary soldiers aimed for regular military employment.¹⁹

Some of these men realized their aspirations; for increasingly during the 1600s, servitors of the sultan aiming for high-profile careers had to provide soldiers, whom they had recruited for their own *mükemmel kapı* or 'well-appointed political household'. Through these privately recruited armies, the grandees of the realm served the sultan on campaign. Or else the presence of mercenaries might permit their patrons, once the latter had obtained a public office, to collect taxes, especially in areas with large nomad populations who would not pay unless there was a show of military force. If the patron lost office, his men might induce him to rebel, as they might view revolt as the royal road to reinstatement; for in the years around 1600 when the mercenary uprisings commonly called Celali rebellions were at their height, the Ottoman administration was much inclined toward amnestying and then appointing former rebels as commanders in border provinces.²⁰ Furthermore some mercenaries might revolt in order to gain acceptance into the regular army, as privileged servitors of the sultan (*kul*). Thus while the employment of mercenaries permitted the Ottoman rulers to hold their own in the competition with rival empires, the cost was destabilization on the domestic level.

Armaments, supplies and the work of the pioneer corps

Some of the more important reasons for Ottoman military success have left no traces in the world of objects, namely the relatively efficient logistical arrangements which ensured that soldiers and sailors were often better fed than their European counterparts. Only archival documents record the peasants that carried grain on the backs of oxen and donkeys to pre-arranged stopping points, where the soldiers could pick up wheat and barley to feed themselves and their mounts.²¹ Furthermore, a large number of artisans accompanied the Ottoman army, who repaired or even produced the arms, saddles, tents and other items required, making it unnecessary for soldiers to enter the towns near the routes leading to the fronts.²² While this obligation must have been burdensome for many artisans, who had to finance shops and raw materials, it was a convenience for the soldiers and also promoted discipline; for otherwise visits of armed men who were strangers to a given locality were the cause of frequent disorders.

As for armaments including muskets, they were produced in many small workshops. As a result, the arms used by a given military unit were not necessarily all of the same type; but this problem was common to many armies of the early modern period. Dispersed production made it possible for non-soldiers to acquire firearms as well, although the administration strictly prohibited the practice. In the seventeenth century handguns appeared often enough in the estate inventories of ordinary people to show that enforcement was erratic at best.²³

Most of the time, the Ottoman Empire was autarchic in terms of gunpowder. When after 1600 the demand for cavalymen declined, these men or their sons could retain their privileged military status if contracting to procure saltpetre, a basic ingredient in the manufacture of gunpowder.²⁴ As for cannons, in the past military historians had often claimed that Ottoman commanders favoured huge grandiose-looking pieces that were inefficient in the field. But in actuality, such items served mainly for show; and Ottoman armies relied on small and medium-sized cannon just like their opponents.²⁵

For the most part the Ottomans confronted Habsburg and Safavid armies in difficult terrain. Eastern Anatolia as well as western Iran were – and are – mountainous, while on the Hungarian front, the Danube and its many tributaries, which flooded and changed course frequently, were serious natural obstacles. Commanders from both sides therefore tried to attack while the opponent was trying to cross a river. Ottoman military men became experts in building bridges: the great architect Sinan (c. 1489/90–1588) recorded that as a young officer he had built ships for use on Lake Van in an anti-Safavid campaign, as well as a bridge close to the

Ottoman–Habsburg frontier.²⁶ Even in the early 1700s, Ottoman observers still felt that the sultans' pioneers were especially skilful; and the Habsburg commander Prince Eugene of Savoy agreed with them.²⁷

The peculiarities of the frontiers

Military advantages apart, the Ottoman armies could count on at least passive support from certain peasants in the Balkans and central Europe. After all, these people must have resented the serfdom progressively imposed on them by their lords during the late Middle Ages and early modernity, and therefore regarded the imposition of Ottoman rule with some equanimity. This issue was of special importance for Hungary. Not that matters always worked out according to the presumed expectations of the villagers. For in sizable parts of the country, the Ottoman authorities apparently wanted to avoid the expenditures necessary for a fully fledged local administration, and permitted Hungarian lords living in the Habsburg lands to organize court sessions and collect taxes.²⁸ As the peasants living under this strange condominium also needed to pay their dues to the Ottoman authorities, they probably did not benefit from whatever tax alleviations the sultans' rule may have brought to parts of the late-mediaeval Balkans.

On the other hand, the Ottoman–Habsburg borderlands were subject to raids undertaken by both sides even in peacetime (see Chapter 3). Sometimes a major raid did serve as a 'declaration of war'; in 1593 for instance, the Long War began in this fashion. Yet many of the captives whose families paid significant sums of money (and in the Ottoman case, costly textiles) for the ransoms of their relatives had been captured not during regular warfare, but during peacetime raids. On the Ottoman–Hungarian border, ransoming was well organized; there were even people who in exchange for payment volunteered to become prisoners, replacing those men who needed to travel back home to collect their ransoms from families and friends. In the western Mediterranean, where corsairs from Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli took captives from the coasts of Spain and mainland Italy, to say nothing of Sicily, ransoming – locally known as *rescate* – was common practice.²⁹ The proceeds were shared between the military establishment of the three North African provinces and the corsair captains, as well as their crews.

Fortified places

On the north-western fronts where the Ottoman Empire bordered on the Habsburg domain, Venice, and Poland, large fortresses and small forts

were the basis of territorial control. The high and relatively thin walls that had protected mediaeval towns were no longer of much use against artillery. Thus the famous land walls of Byzantine Constantinople, never breached before the mid-fifteenth century, did not hold out for long before the cannons of Mehmed the Conqueror. In the sixteenth century, state-of-the-art fortifications were not very high, but extremely thick and supplied with bastions allowing the defenders to shoot the attackers wherever they might be; this arrangement typically resulted in a star-shaped fortification. Often the new-style walls were of earth faced with stone, as this type of defence-work was most likely to hold up cannon balls.

Such fortresses, if their supplies of food and water did not run out, were typically reduced by placing explosives in subterranean passages to bring part of the walls down. During the siege of Vienna in the late summer of 1683, to mention one famous example, one of the gates had suffered major damage in this manner and could only be provisionally repaired; if the Polish and Habsburg armies had arrived just a little later, the city would probably have been taken. But an early autumn with long-lasting rains might protect a fortress quite efficiently; for under such conditions, digging subterranean conduits might be impossible, to say nothing of the diseases ensuing among the unfortunate soldiers.

Ottoman armies contained significant numbers of skilful sappers; apart from their technical expertise, these men also had to be ready to fight, as the commanders of the beleaguered fortresses sent out their own teams of sappers to find and annihilate those of the Ottomans, before they could do irreversible damage. Observing the war over the Cretan fortress of Candia (Heraklion/Kandiye, 1645–69), Evliya Çelebi described both Ottoman and Venetian sappers while occupied at their deadly trade.³⁰

Ottoman control in border provinces relied on often mighty fortresses. On the Safavid frontier in the sixteenth century, the towns of Van and Kars were important strongholds; in addition, the sultan could rely on the numerous castles held by Kurdish princes, whose support counted as a major element in border defence.³¹ In the west Buda Castle, on a high hill over the Danube and formerly the seat of the kings of Hungary, became the stronghold occupied by the senior governor (*beylerbeyi*) of Buda province. As for the countryside, it was dotted with large and small forts; those of modest size might feature palisades rather than stone walls (*palanka*).³² The Habsburgs built similar fortifications of varying sizes, while Venice founded Palmanova, a fortress town meant to prevent Ottoman incursions into Friuli. The military worth of small forts might be greater than their size indicated: presumably the Ottoman campaign of 1532 did not result in a second siege of Vienna because one of these forts

held up the sultan's army for so long that, once it had been conquered, the campaign season was over.³³

By contrast for the Safavids, fortified places were of limited importance. In the early 1700s Dürri Ahmed Efendi, an Ottoman ambassador to Iran, claimed that the Safavids had only three major fortresses, namely Kandahar, Yerevan (Revan/Erivan), and the Caucasus stronghold of Derbend.³⁴ It is of interest that he did not mention Tabriz; but the upshot of Dürri Ahmed Efendi's description was that an Ottoman attacker would not have to worry overmuch about enemy fortifications. Against the frequent Ottoman invasions of northern Iran, the typical defence was that of 'scorched earth': the population was obliged to move, and harvests were burned so that an invading army would soon suffer from lack of food and forage. Though the populations of the affected regions presumably suffered a good deal, the strategy was quite effective in a military sense; for, as noted, the sultans made many conquests of Safavid territory, but were unable to hold on to most of them. Having to respond to an unfamiliar strategy partly explains the difficulties of Ottoman armies on Iranian soil.

Motivations for warfare

Senior Ottoman administrators, at least in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, may have often wanted to keep the soldiers away from Istanbul where they might rebel and instead occupy them on remote frontiers – to say nothing of the fact that a vizier's career also was likely to benefit from a successful campaign. Admittedly, warfare also implied serious risks; for while a sultan might lose his throne after a military failure, it was common enough for viziers to suffer execution, as happened for instance to Kara Mustafa Paşa after his failed siege of Vienna and subsequent defeats in Hungary (1683).³⁵

Sultans also gained a great deal of legitimacy through victory in war. In the later 1400s and throughout the sixteenth century, warrior sultans like Mehmed II (r. 1451–81), Selim I (r. 1512–20) and Süleyman (r. 1520–66) won enormous prestige, expressed by grandiose titles. Moreover, this prestige continues to the present day, as obvious from the endless number of landmarks named for Mehmed the Conqueror in contemporary Turkey and the popularity of a television series glorifying Süleyman and his family. After the latter's death under the walls of Szigetvar, it became exceptional for Ottoman rulers to act as their own generals; Murad IV (r. 1623–40) certainly did so; but then he was an exception in many ways. Most monarchs of the post-Süleymanic period like Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603) or Mehmed IV (r. 1648–87) might accompany their armies, but

leave the business of campaigning to viziers and military men of more modest status. Yet participation even under these conditions still gained the monarchs a reputation as warriors against the infidel.

This kind of 'vicarious glory' might become a starting point for other types of legitimacy as well. For in the seventeenth century at least, quite a few people seemingly believed that only after gaining victories over infidels and heretics, could a sultan legitimately set up a pious foundation, as he was not supposed to use funds from the treasury for this purpose.³⁶ Religious merit was thus indirectly but intimately linked with victory in the wars against European infidels and Shi'ite heretics.

Soldiers were an important pressure group favouring campaigns; or at least the voices of those who felt differently have not been preserved.³⁷ After all, soldiers' pay was limited; and only through the booty gained by warfare could janissaries and mercenaries hope to accumulate a modest fortune; however, we may assume that an ordinary soldier realized only small sums when selling a captive or two to a slave trader. Moreover, as most of the soldiers were quite young, they were probably unable to gauge the risk of death and mutilation that are so apparent to the outsider or older person. As we have very few first-person narratives of Ottoman military men, any discussion of their motivations is fraught with uncertainty. Some soldiers may have been imbued with the ethos of warriors for the faith (*gazis*) to the exclusion of most other considerations. But we should avoid claiming that Ottoman soldiers never thought about what would happen to them if they became ill or incapacitated. It is better to admit that we just do not know.

Given these conditions, there was not much of a public discourse lauding the benefits of peace per se; and people disillusioned with warfare of all kinds must have found it difficult to formulate their sentiments in ways that might attract an audience.

Valuable arms and armour

As previously noted, many Ottoman accoutrements of war in present-day collections were never used in actual fighting; after all, most equipment taken into the field ultimately broke down or was otherwise lost. Firearms especially were dismantled and revamped or even discarded when technical innovations rendered them obsolete. People must have melted down such items to retrieve the valuable metals from which they had been forged. Moreover, differently from what happened in Latin Europe, where the armouries of more or less important noblemen, now converted into museums, contain numerous swords, pieces of body-armour and small firearms, the armouries (*cebehanes*) that Ottoman viziers,

commanders of fortresses, or other important military men also must have acquired just do not survive. Nor do we possess many remnants of the naval armouries which once formed part of the arsenals (*tersane*) of Gelibolu/Gallipoli or Istanbul.

As a result, the accoutrements of war which we can discuss are very often ceremonial: in other words, sultans and high dignitaries wore them at courtly celebrations or victory parades to signify their elevated rank. The chronicler Mustafa Sâfi waxed lyrical when describing the collection of decorated historical arms and other precious items that courtiers displayed in the treasury when the young Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) visited it in 1613.³⁸ Or else some items were diplomatic gifts brought back by ambassadors; thus Şehdi Osman Efendi, who visited Russia in the mid 1700s, not only was taken on a 'guided tour' of the arms factory in Tula, but also received some of the products of this enterprise to take with him to Istanbul.³⁹ Similarly, the Ottoman administration also occasionally gifted splendid weaponry and other items appropriate to a military man. The Habsburg ambassadors receiving these presents seem to have remitted quite a few of them to their sovereigns and, as a result, the Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer in Vienna (the 'Chamber of Courtly Arms and Hunting Gear') contains an impressive selection of high-quality Ottoman arms.⁴⁰

Thus the present chapter will focus on weaponry that travelled between the sultans' territories on the one hand and the Habsburg Empire on the other. It is most regrettable that specialists of Ottoman–Safavid relations have not much explored the material culture of warfare on the eastern front of the empire; and, as a non-specialist, the present author has not ventured into this difficult territory.⁴¹

Moreover, the original recipients might pass on some of their pieces to other princes; a very well-studied example is the Dresden Rüstkammer (Armoury) of the electors of Saxony, who had only very limited contingents fighting on the Ottoman frontier.⁴² But the Habsburg Emperor Rudolf II (r. 1576–1612) gifted some of his Ottoman arms to the Dresden court, perhaps to encourage a greater commitment to the Long War. During this period, the Elector of Saxony also acquired Ottoman arms from Florence; at least some of them may have been booty made by the corsairs of Santo Stefano, who operated under the patronage of the Medici grand dukes.⁴³

In the case of princes who had personally fought in wars with the Ottomans, such as the Habsburgs or the Margraves of Baden, their propagandists liked to circulate tales that this or that item had been taken as booty. It is true that the grand vizier Kara Mustafa Paşa had to leave his tent behind when retreating from Vienna in September 1683,

and its contents were distributed to the various commanders of the Polish–Habsburg army ending the siege. As a result, owners of Ottoman objects particularly liked to link the pieces in their possession to the events of 1683. But scholars who have studied the relevant collections have pointed out that such claims while ‘sounding heroic’ were quite often spurious, and many, if not most, of the surviving pieces were really diplomatic gifts.⁴⁴

(PLATE 20) A HELMET, SUPPOSEDLY ONCE OWNED BY SOKOLLU

Helmets continue in use to the present day, although the types current in the early modern period have long been relegated to museums. Apparently in the Ottoman world these defensive arms rarely appeared outside of battle-scenes. Janissaries were an exception to this rule, because the depictions of officers and men in public ceremonies featured their characteristic headdress, which also served as a protection in battle. While we have reports of Ottoman sultans wearing jewelled helmets when entering a city recently conquered, the genealogies of the house of Osman produced during the 1500s and 1600s always show the monarchs wearing elaborate turbans decorated with jewels. In the same vein, gravestones typically featured turbans or dervish head-coverings, but not helmets.

Correspondingly the number of surviving helmets from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries – also known as *çiçak*; in German this term became *Tschägge* – is quite limited. Collections otherwise rich in Ottoman arms, such as the Badisches Landesmuseum (State Museum of Baden) in Karlsruhe or the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen (State Art Collections) in Dresden contain only a few pieces and sometimes mere fragments.⁴⁵ The Askeri Müze (Military Museum) in Istanbul, which holds one of the largest collections of Ottoman arms and armour including helmets, shows on its website a helmet almost without decoration, which tradition attributes to Sultan Orhan (r. 1326–62). This item, conical and with a button on top as was common in Ottoman helmets of later times as well, is much damaged, with certain sections completely missing.⁴⁶ Around the edge there is a band with an inscription, but supplementary protective features such ear guards are absent. Given the condition of the piece, it is difficult to say whether it has lost some of these additional parts or whether from the outset it was a very simple, basic object.

Another form of helmet, often described as of ‘Caucasus style’, consisted of a slightly convex iron top with a dense ‘veil’ of iron chain links attached. The ‘veil’ reached down to the shoulders and was cut out where the face of the wearer was to be; but some of the chain mail must still have hung over the latter’s forehead and hopefully helped to protect

it. The simple versions had minimal ornamentation; but some people wanted more elaborate versions and had their names engraved, or else ordered convex head-coverings with damascened ornaments and inscriptions. Military men whose rank and means permitted such luxuries might also have coral pendants attached to the 'veil' and/or included brass rings contrasting with the iron to form a yellow-and-white design.⁴⁷

Much more richly adorned pieces survive from the middle of the sixteenth century. One such helmet, located in the treasury of the Topkapı Palace Museum and frequently shown in exhibitions, has a full complement of protective devices including a nose guard, a sunshade and a metal plate to protect the back of the neck, in addition to very elaborate ear guards.⁴⁸ On the body of the helmet and also on the nose guard there are inscriptions from the Qu'ran. Presumably this item has seen some use, because one of the inscriptions is so worn as to be illegible; and as it was made in the mid 1500s, it may well have belonged to Sultan Süleyman or else to one of his sons. But given its – on the whole – rather good condition, it may well have served these imperial figures as an ornament in victory celebrations.

A similar head-covering made of iron or blackened steel and also intended for ceremonial use, dates from the late 1500s.⁴⁹ The decoration is perhaps even more opulent, as the helmet contains not only large turquoises but also cabochon rubies; but there are no inscriptions. As this helmet seemingly dates to the late 1500s, it possibly belonged to Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603); but this is only a conjecture.

At least in the imagination of patrons and artists, and perhaps in reality as well, a ceremonial helmet could be yet more elaborately decorated (see also Chapter 1). Dated to 1594–95, an Ottoman manuscript illustrating the life of the Prophet Muhammad (*siyer-i nebi*) shows the latter presenting his uncle, the elderly but doughty warrior Hamza, with a highly decorated red banner.⁵⁰ Hamza wears a gilt helmet with a cloth wrapped around it; the ear guards are clearly on view. Most remarkably the helmet features two large feathers, one of which may have been attached to the nose guard; but the exact arrangement is obscured by the turban. A second feather sprouts from the top of the helmet; if at all realistic, this miniature shows that some helmets allowed the owner to anchor not one but two feathers. As the latter signified rank, the painter has shown Hamza's followers wearing only a single feather, attached to the tips of their head-coverings.

The ornamentation of luxurious helmets apparently did not change very much between the mid 1500s and the late seventeenth century; for the two ear guards kept in Karlsruhe and dated to this later period show a similar design in gold damascening which covered the ear guards

and probably also the original helmet – now lost. In both cases, an almond-shaped application contained in its centre a design in figured openwork, so that the wearer could hear what was going on around him. The individual parts making up the ear guard were attached to one another by means of rivets.

But here the difference between ‘imperial’ and ‘non-imperial’ strikes the eye: while the rivets in the Karlsruhe museum are of gilt copper, the Istanbul helmet has a series of little turquoises rendering the mundane fastenings almost invisible. In addition, the almond-shaped openings that facilitate hearing in the Karlsruhe item consist of simply decorated bands, while the Istanbul helmet features a much more elaborate design including turquoises.

As for the piece in the Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, which came to Vienna from the collection of Archduke Ferdinand II (1529–95), it is similar though not identical to the two pieces in the Istanbul treasury. The background of this collection is rather special; for instead of marrying one of the princesses that his father had intended for him, the Archduke found a spouse of his own choosing. Philippine (1527–80) was a member of the Welser banking family of Augsburg in southern Germany, whom the emperor Ferdinand I refused to regard as a suitable daughter-in-law. While Philippine was alive, Ferdinand II was thus considered unfit for most public offices; and the couple and their children lived in the castle of Ambras, today on the outskirts of the Austrian city of Innsbruck. Here Archduke Ferdinand, presumably with time on his hands, and money ‘no object’, assembled a collection of natural phenomena as well as human artefacts from all over the world (*Kunst- und Wunderkammer*), constructing a special building to house his treasures. While this structure is still extant, at one point in its history the collection was moved to Vienna, where much of the gold- and silversmiths’ work is on display in the newly reopened *Kunstkammer* section of the Kunsthistorisches Museum (Museum of Art History).⁵¹ But many other items returned to Ambras when the castle became a museum as well.

A register covering Ferdinand’s collection dated to 1583 assigns the helmet now in the Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer to Sokollu Mehmed (1506–79), grand vizier to Sultans Süleyman, Selim II (r. 1566–74) and Murad III (r. 1574–95); thus this item must have been in Ambras from 1583 at the latest; put differently it had arrived within four years after the murder of the famous grand vizier.

Sokollu Mehmed quite often came to Hungary, where one of his relatives served as a governor, for he participated in several campaigns against the Habsburgs including that of 1566, in which Sultan Süleyman met his death.⁵² A Slav by ethnicity who had come into the sultan’s service through

the levy of boys (*devşirme*), Sokollu made ample use of his local connections when campaigning in the Balkans. He rose to further prominence through his support of Prince Selim, the successful contender for the succession to Sultan Süleyman, and ultimately married the daughter of Selim II, who co-founded one of his two Istanbul mosques. As the grand vizier could employ the famous architect Sinan (c. 1489/90–1588) for these projects, and also have a close relative appointed Orthodox patriarch of Pécs, he must, when at the height of his power, have enjoyed near-royal status. But after the death of Selim II his prestige began to fade, though, at the time of his murder, he still held the office of grand vizier.

It is as yet a mystery how the helmet, which had probably not seen heavy use as the ribbon attaching the ear guards to the wearer's head is still intact, may have reached Archduke Ferdinand.⁵³ The latter was interested in systematically displaying the arms and armour of the most famous rulers and commanders of his time; and as we have seen Sultan Süleyman and Sokollu Mehmed took their places next to various French kings and Habsburg emperors. According to a contemporary register describing the collection, the former owner, presumably Sokollu, sometimes attached a turban to his helmet, just as the Prophet's uncle Hamza on the miniature had done.⁵⁴ As the Ambras item broadly resembles the two helmets in the Topkapı Palace, we can at least surmise that it came from a workshop that also enjoyed the sultans' patronage. The inscriptions are versets from the Qu'ran and citations of God's 'Beautiful Names', as seems to have been customary in such items during the 1500s. Moreover, the ear guards resemble those of the helmet with ruby-and-turquoise incrustations from the sultan's treasury.⁵⁵ But the decorations of the Ambras piece, while opulent, are clearly more modest than those of the treasury helmets: there are no precious or semi-precious stones, and the Ambras item has gold and silver ornamentation only at the top and bottom. By contrast, the remaining surface has been left blank, with undecorated iron visually dominant. We do not know whether this modesty had a meaning: perhaps the owner wished to imply that he may have seemed near-royal, but in the end was only a servitor of the sultan.

(PLATE 21) A WATER FLASK: FROM CAMPAIGN EQUIPMENT TO
COVETED LUXURY OBJECT

A soldier in the field needed to carry a water flask (*matara*), although most miniatures showing warriors in action do not feature them; perhaps they were normally attached to the saddle. A typical *matara* was of leather, as glass or faience would have been too easily broken. However, for purposes of display, it was possible to manufacture flasks out of precious metals, as

happened at the court of Süleyman the Magnificent. A spectacular piece from about 1560, in other words the closing years of the sultan's reign, has fortunately escaped the melting pots of the mint, while a great many treasury items disappeared during the hard-pressed 1700s and 1800s.⁵⁶ The *matara* retains two golden chains, one to hold the stopper and another more intricate one, consisting of several strands of gold wire; the latter served to carry the flask when displayed during ceremonies. A reference to this piece appeared in the treasury inventory of 1680; at some point in time, it had been restored and on that occasion presumably the officials in charge had the cover replaced.⁵⁷ A very precious *matara* might possess its own box, made of embroidered leather.⁵⁸

The *mataras* carried by ordinary soldiers or even officers of the early modern period have disappeared a long time ago, although simple flasks of a rather similar type continued in use over the centuries and were available even in the 1980s. Museums in Germany, Austria and Hungary possess quite a few Ottoman flasks with silver and gold embroideries on fine leather, the latter glued to the coarser and more resistant material from which the flask had been manufactured. The former users are unknown – if indeed there were any, for these pieces may have been brand new when gifted. But if any ex-owners did exist, they must have been men of substance.⁵⁹ As for the *matara* discussed here, in terms of shape it resembles more closely the luxury item preserved in the treasury of the Topkapı Palace Museum.

There is a well-nigh irresistible story attached to this particular item, which is why it appears in the present volume that mostly focuses on the possessions of wealthy but non-royal personages.⁶⁰ In 1582, Murad III had his son Mehmed, later Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603), circumcised with a great festivity, often described. A richly illustrated festival book survives, showing the entertainments, one of only two sets of Ottoman miniatures immortalizing such an event.⁶¹ The sultan had invited those princes with whom he was currently at peace to attend the festivity in person; one such invitation went to the Habsburg Emperor Rudolf II (r. 1576–1612). Ambassadors on a friendly errand normally brought gifts; and since a source close to the Habsburg court refers to a richly decorated *matara* presented on this occasion, the item from the Hofjagd- und Rüstammer may well be the flask in question.⁶²

This Vienna *matara* is decorated with delicate cream-coloured, grey and blue leather appliqué on a red ground; the strings holding the ivory stopper and facilitating transportation are both of silk. While there are no shiny gold or silver surfaces, the decorations have been attached to the leather base with yarn containing gold thread. This item must have impressed the imperial court by the delicacy of the workmanship; and today's viewers tend to agree. In consequence this item frequently appears

in exhibitions, and on the website of the Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, it features among the museum's most valued possessions.⁶³

(PLATE 22) 'MY NAME IS BOZDOĞAN PUSICAN; WILL TRAVEL
WHEN REQUIRED'

The shape of the battle mace (*bozdoğan* or *topuz*) is very simple; a baton ending in a ball, which may be rendered more dangerous by studding it with various sharp excrescences. Presumably with the spread of firearms, the mace lost much of its effectiveness on the battlefield; but perhaps due to its conveniently small size, it was to have a long history as a ceremonial object, namely a baton of command recognized in the Ottoman world as well as in central Europe. The Topkapı Palace Museum contains a mace that seemingly forms a set together with the helmet decorated with rubies and turquoises discussed in the previous section.⁶⁴ Presumably these items once had served as attributes of the Sultan, similar to the famous golden *matara* from the palace treasury.

In the eastern lands of central Europe, the *bozdoğan* became an often abundantly ornamented symbol of command, carried in formal portraits by seventeenth-century Polish *hetmans*, or holders of the highest military positions directly under the king. In Polish, the name of this type of mace is *buława hetmańska*. To Polish noblemen the *buława hetmańska* formed part of a style of self-presentation that they considered Sarmatian, after a people of antiquity about whom very little is known (see Chapter 7). Similarly to other 'Sarmatian' objects, the *bozdoğan* was quite often an import from the Ottoman world, a popular source of luxury items for Polish gentlemen throughout the 1600s and 1700s.⁶⁵

German speakers adopted the term *bozdoğan* in the form of *pusican* or *buzogan*; and the Duke of Saxony even had a *pusican* of local manufacture.⁶⁶ A mace made in Hungary or Transylvania, where the use of Ottoman motifs by gold- and silversmiths was especially widespread, has survived in the collection of the margraves of Baden.⁶⁷ This piece is especially interesting because an inscription states that it was taken as booty in 1597, by a participant in a campaign in which the Habsburgs did quite poorly.⁶⁸ In addition there survive holders for *bozdoğan*s dating to the late 1600s; one of these pieces is quite worn, so it must have seen practical use. We can thus assume that, despite its limitations, some soldiers of the early modern period continued to use the *bozdoğan* as a weapon.

Ottoman sultans issued quite a few highly decorated maces to Transylvanian princes; after all, the court was well aware of the ceremonial role of the *bozdoğan* in east-central Europe.⁶⁹ Thus Michael II Apafy

(or Apafi, 1676–1713), who as an adolescent succeeded to the principality of Transylvania (r. 1690–97), received a *bozdoğan* from Istanbul, likely as a sign that the sultan recognized his new position. However, the Habsburg armies had occupied Transylvania and the court in Vienna did not wish to re-establish even a semi-independent dynasty. Michael Apafy's attempts to change this situation by a personal visit to the Habsburg court did not produce any positive results.⁷⁰ In 1697, he resigned his position in exchange for acceptance into the imperial nobility.

For this unlucky prince, the *bozdoğan* symbolized an attachment to the Ottoman sultan, who since the mid sixteenth century had been the overlord of the autonomous Transylvanian rulers. The loss of his position as a ruler must have prompted Apafy to turn over the weapon to Emperor Leopold I (r. 1658–1705); and thus the item entered the imperial collection of arms. As for the story told here, it is recorded on a slip of paper attached to the weapon. Thus through two successive donations both resulting – directly or indirectly – from the conflict over Transylvania, this piece must have travelled from the sultan's armoury to the Apafy residence and from there to Vienna.

(PLATE 23) HORSES MOVED AROUND, AND SO DID HORSE-TAILS

In the Ottoman army, horse-tails held aloft on a pole signified the status of a commander; sultans if they took the field in person used seven *tuğs*, grand viziers five, and other viziers three.⁷¹ As for the provincial governors, those of higher rank (*beylerbeyi*) had the right to harbour two *tuğs*, while those of a lower level (*sancakbeyi*) could only carry one such item. As no other commanders could display a *tuğ*, the appearance of just one such piece already meant that when a military confrontation was in the offing, it would take place on a fairly high level and was not just a raid directed by a junior commander. At the formal beginning of a major campaign, the *tuğs* belonging to the sultan and viziers were brought out of storage and displayed with a good deal of pomp and ceremony.⁷² When the army was at rest, the sets of horse-tails took their places in front of the tents of the dignitaries to whom they belonged. However, the use of the *tuğ* was largely confined to wartime; when the sultans and their dignitaries paraded in Istanbul, the poles and their horse-tails often, though not always, remained in the storehouse.⁷³

Some *tuğs* consisted of a single horse-tail affixed to a lance; others were more intricately adorned. The artisans manufacturing such items might attach small quantities of horse-hair or parts of a tail to different levels of a highly decorated pole; and it was also customary to dye the *tuğ*, often to a bright red or yellow. Certain items also featured braids made out of

horsehair.⁷⁴ Similarly to flags and standards, the *tuğs* could thus serve as rallying points for soldiers in the field.

Unavoidably, quite a few *tuğs* fell into enemy hands. Exactly the same thing must have happened to the standards of Habsburg, Venetian, Polish, or Muscovite armies; but it was not Ottoman practice to retain these pieces as mementoes, and even less to place captured infidel flags in a mosque or mausoleum as trophies. By contrast, it was common enough in Latinate Europe to keep *tuğs* and flags in a church, often over centuries.⁷⁵ Nor do we know whether any Ottoman grandees acquired trophy flags as collectibles; and successful leaders do not seem to have often retained their *tuğs* while in retirement for future generations to contemplate and ultimately place in museums. As a result, quite a few *tuğs* that we possess today come from foreign collections, rather than from Istanbul, and the number of early modern foreign flags in Turkish museums does not seem very large.⁷⁶

As *tuğs* do not carry inscriptions, dating can be a problem; for these items were in use from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. Once again the Ambras collection with its many registers is very helpful, because the set of horse-tails in this museum today was on record already in the late sixteenth century. It would have been even better if these documents had shown how the Archduke Ferdinand had acquired his Ottoman items; but on this subject, the scribes had nothing to say.

(PLATE 24) PORTABLE TEXTILE PALACES AND 'WOVEN WALLS'

Archduke Ferdinand did not possess an Ottoman tent; perhaps in the sixteenth century no Ottoman army had to leave its campsite in such a hurry that a valuable item of this sort was left behind. By contrast, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries such situations occurred more than once; and as a result the museums of Cracow, Vienna, Karlsruhe, Ingolstadt and others contain the tents of various prominent figures, admittedly often only in fragments. Though undated, these tents are helpful in establishing dates; for we often know at what time they had entered the collections of a given king or prince, and this fact at least gives us a *terminus ante quem*.

Ottoman dignitaries also appreciated luxurious tents; and in 1720 the circumcision festivities for the sons of Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) took place partly in an assemblage of tents pitched in Okmeydanı, today a heavily populated district of Istanbul but then a largely open field where archery competitions took place. Even better from our point of view, tents could not be melted down, although of course they needed protection from the elements and from assorted pests. Both the Topkapı Palace and the Military Museum of Istanbul thus contain spectacular collections of grandees' tents.

However, in the absence of dated inscriptions specialists have established dates according to stylistic criteria, sometimes a difficult task.⁷⁷ Remarkably in Istanbul too the oldest items, generally in poor condition, date from the early 1600s; and nothing seems to have remained of the tents housing Sultan Süleyman or Mehmed III. A recent study of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century courtly tents thus focuses on miniatures, and as a standard of comparison uses the tents found in present-day Central Asia.⁷⁸

In a certain sense an Ottoman campsite reflected the social order and, more particularly, the relationship between elite and non-elite. The tents inhabited by ordinary soldiers must have been strictly functional and have rarely survived. By contrast governors, viziers and sultans not only had sumptuously outfitted tents, but also could lay claim to privacy, a precious privilege in a crowded place. Such personages had their compounds delineated with textiles stretched out between poles, so that there was a 'woven wall' known as *zūkak* that separated the area they inhabited from the public thoroughfare. Abdülcelil Levni's depictions of the circumcision festivities of 1720 show this arrangement very clearly, although the 'woven walls' apparently did not feature the elaborate ornaments on record for Mughal India.⁷⁹ These arrangements for the monarch's privacy were efficient enough that Sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1654–87) did not hesitate to take one of his consorts along on a campaign against Poland. On the way, she gave birth to the future Sultan Ahmed III.⁸⁰

On campaigns, the tent housing the sultan (*otağ-ı humayun* or *hünkâr çadırı*) stood next to the structures where the treasury was kept and the council of viziers convened; and the executioner's tent, where prisoners and criminals were killed in view of the entire camp, also was located nearby.⁸¹ Special tents attached to the dwelling of the sultans permitted the latter to listen in on council meetings; for similarly to the practice current in the Topkapı Palace, the sultan did not attend these gatherings but could hear what was going on if he so wished. There might also be a connection between the residence of the sultan and the grand vizier's tent, which also featured elaborate decorations. This fact is all the more remarkable as when the court was in Istanbul, from the 1600s onward the conduct of state business gradually moved from the palace to the grand vizier's residence, whose location varied but which might be at some distance from the Topkapı Sarayı.⁸²

Whether palatial or ordinary, all tents were made either of cotton or a mixture of fibres that some specialists call 'tent fabrics' (*çadır bezi*); a Bavarian museum possessing an Ottoman tent described the material as linen backed with felt.⁸³ More rarely the embroiderers worked on satin.⁸⁴ As an opulent form of decoration, artisans and their patrons often chose

appliqué work, with pieces of fabric and leather forming the design. But other types of embroidery were also in use, especially to emphasize contours. Apparently the embroiderers knew in advance what shape the item they decorated was going to take, for the ornamentation typically followed the architecture of the tent quite closely. While often faded today, the original colours must have been very bright; and there was no attempt at camouflage.

The tent discussed here is from the Armeemuseum (Army museum) in Ingolstadt, a medium-sized Bavarian town not far from Munich.⁸⁵ According to the information provided by the museum authorities, the tent served the audiences of Süleyman Paşa, grand vizier, who fought in the second battle of Mohács (1687). The Bavarian Elector Max Emanuel (r. 1679–1726) took this prize with him to Munich, where an English visitor saw it before the year was up. In accordance with Ottoman preferences, the colour red was much in evidence; and the walls of the tent show a sequence of arches filled with decorative medallions, while at regular intervals there are windows with elaborate frames and blinds. After significant restoration, the inner covering of the tent has been reinstated (in the colour image taken in the 1970s it had not been visible because of its poor condition). Only the textile which must have once covered the ground has permanently gone missing.

(PLATE 25) HEAPS OF STONE AND LITTLE SAPLINGS: THE MATERIAL
CULTURE OF PEACE-MAKING, ACCORDING TO LUIGI FERDINANDO
MARSILI AND EBU SEHIL NU'MAN EFENDI

The Ottoman–Habsburg war of 1683–99 began with the second siege of Vienna (1683) and resulted in the Habsburg conquest of Hungary, from which, as noted, Max Emanuel of Bavaria brought back Süleyman Paşa's tent. Until the Peace of Karlowitz (today Sremski Karlovci in Serbia) fighting continued over some 16 years and cost both sides many thousands of human lives and, in addition, a great deal of money.⁸⁶ The Ottoman ambassador Zülfikâr Paşa, sent to Vienna in 1688, had been unable to end the war, visibly due to the desire of the Habsburg emperor Leopold I (r. 1658–1705) and his generals to conquer yet more territory after the fall of Buda to the imperial forces in 1686.⁸⁷ However, by the 1690s the Habsburg side also needed to end the conflict, under pressure from the campaigns of Louis XIV (r. 1643–1715) in Alsace and, on a more general level, the expense of continuous warfare.

One of the main negotiators on the Emperor's side was Luigi Ferdinando Marsili (1658–1730), a general originating from the papal city of Bologna.⁸⁸ As a young man Marsili had spent almost a year in Istanbul (1679–80),

where he had accompanied Pietro Civran, the incoming *bailo* of Venice.⁸⁹ During his stay he established relations with Ottoman intellectual figures including Hezarfenn Hüseyin Efendi, and was able to acquire a copy of the latter's *Telhîsü'l-beyân fî kavânîn-i Âl-i Osmân*.⁹⁰ Throughout his life, Marsili was to work on a book about the Ottoman army, which, however, only appeared in print after the author's death.

Having entered the army of Leopold I, Marsili fought in the war of 1683–99; in 1683–84, he got to spend time in the Ottoman Empire as a prisoner of war. However, he returned home in 1684 and continued his career, in the course of which he gathered not only military intelligence but also geographical, zoological and even archaeological information on the hitherto little-known areas bordering the Middle Danube. For as a representative of the new-style 'military science' emerging in the late 1600s, Marsili believed that Roman fortifications merited study not merely from an educational but also from a purely military and political point of view: they might teach the Habsburg overlord how to control his new possessions more effectively.⁹¹ As his share of the booty, Marsili brought back a store of manuscripts, which even today survive in Bologna.⁹²

After his release, the general returned to Istanbul to negotiate the projected peace treaty; and in 1699–1700, he was in charge of determining the course of the border 'on the ground'; however, he was responsible to Wolfgang III, Count of Oettingen-Wallerstein, who headed the Habsburg delegation. On the Ottoman side, the person in charge was Reis Mehmed Efendi (in Italian, Maometto; later known as Rami Mehmed Paşa), while Carlo Ruzzini represented Venice.⁹³ Marsili apparently assumed that important matters should be the responsibility of the Ottomans and Habsburgs alone, and tended to sideline Ruzzini in consequence.⁹⁴ At certain times a representative of the governor of Bosnia, Hâbil Paşa, also intervened in the negotiations.

Documenting the institution of a new border

For the Ottoman elite, it was to some extent an admission of failure that the sultan's representatives needed to agree with their Habsburg opponents concerning a 'line on the map'.⁹⁵ After all, the latter defined the extent of the domains of the Ottoman ruler, whose officials now governed a polity with more or less stable borders, rather than an empire ever expanding into infidel territory under special divine protection. Admittedly, however, the linear border was a novelty only with respect to the Habsburgs; for the Ottomans had previously agreed on 'linear borders' both with the Venetians and with the Commonwealth of

Poland–Lithuania.⁹⁶ The reasons for this differentiation are not totally clear; but it is worth noting that in both the Venetian and the Polish case, wars alternated with lengthy periods of relative peace and close commercial relations; on the other hand trade with Vienna or the attendance of Ottoman traders at the fair of Leipzig gained importance only in the 1700s, after the linear border had been agreed upon in 1699.⁹⁷ Perhaps the Habsburgs, who flaunted their imperial title, were viewed with particular hostility at the sultans' court, as at least in the sixteenth-century Ottoman perspective they were no more than the 'kings of Vienna'.

Not that in the early years after 1699 the recently determined border was always clearly recognizable. For in his remarkable memoir Osman Ağa, a junior officer who had escaped from slavery in the Habsburg lands in 1699, left an impressive account of the agonizing uncertainties that he and his company suffered, until they finally reached safety in an Ottoman town.⁹⁸

For historians searching for images that show Ottoman officials involved in a peacemaking process, it is fortunate that Marsili commissioned an – unfortunately anonymous – artist to produce six paintings and a drawing, which are all extant.⁹⁹ Made in the early 1700s these items are documents rather than works of art, as is apparent from the fact that letters appear over the most prominent figures and landscape features, so as to allow the viewer to visualize not only the environment but also the body language of the protagonists. Unfortunately the captions, which surely once existed, have now disappeared. Thus we can only assume but not document that the Habsburg representative was in fact Marsili and not his superior.¹⁰⁰

Remarkably, at the beginning of the procedure, the presumed Reis Mehmed Efendi and his Habsburg counterpart appear as embracing one another. However, if the general from Bologna is really the personage depicted, as is likely, alternatively we may assume that the Ottoman figure was not the head of the Ottoman delegation at all, but Marsili's opposite number İbrahim Efendi; for it was these two people that travelled through the borderlands. We also may wonder whether this gesture, if in fact it took place, had been decided upon ahead of time or else was an on-the-spot gesture of the two personalities concerned.¹⁰¹ After all, given Marsili's acquaintances among the Istanbul elite, possibly the two men were not complete strangers.

So far, we have not found any report from the circle of either Reis Mehmed or İbrahim Efendi describing the 1699 procedures from an Ottoman point of view. But we do possess the account of Ebu Sehil Nu'man Efendi, who in 1739–41 acted as legal advisor to Mevkufatî Mehmed Efendi, a future grand vizier. This latter official was in charge of

revising the border after a recent war (1737–39) in which the Habsburgs had done poorly, and they now needed to return Belgrade to the Ottoman domains.¹⁰² It was Nu'man Efendi's job to write the document (*hüccet*) recording the agreements achieved and thus give them validity in an Islamic court of law.¹⁰³

Throughout, Nu'man Efendi did not describe anything resembling the sociability that played such a significant role in Marsili's reports. Apparently the successful conclusion of the demarcation process was not marked by a common meal, of the kind Marsili had described; or perhaps Nu'man Efendi did not wish to mention it. Or else the political pressures of 1740 prevented such conviviality; for in this year, the male line of the Austrian Habsburgs died out, leaving the new Empress Maria Theresa and her husband Francis Stephen of Lorraine unrecognized and insecure. Late in the same year, the recently enthroned King Frederick II of Prussia (r. 1740–86) successfully invaded Silesia, beginning the War of the Austrian Succession; Nu'man Efendi worried about what might happen if the Prussians took Vienna.¹⁰⁴ Often without reliable news from the various theatres of war, Nu'man Efendi thus reported on the tensions between the Habsburg and Ottoman delegations, but also on his own relationship with his master, which was openly hostile.

A triple memorial

By contrast Marsili was apparently quite satisfied with the negotiations and also with the diplomatic contact he had established with Reis Mehmed Efendi or, on a day-to-day level, with İbrahim Efendi. For one of his pictures, a group portrait featuring the people officially involved in determining the border, definitely gives the Ottoman representative the place of honour: he sits in the centre, wearing a fur-lined bright red caftan; and even though this vibrant red also appears in the clothes of a scribe seated on the left-hand margin, it is the Ottoman negotiator that first strikes the eye. As for the Venetian, he is in a visually less prominent position; apart from the map showing the Danube, all three dignitaries exhibit their appointment documents and have their secretaries with them. A turbaned figure of modest prominence between the Ottoman and Venetian representatives is hard to identify; he may be Osman Ağa, who had also been involved in the negotiations.¹⁰⁵

However, the presumed Marsili sits on what may have been a stool or the root of a tree, so that he is placed a bit higher than his Ottoman counterpart; his raised hand further makes it seem as if he were expounding a point to his interlocutors. In the background, the outline of a tent provides a visual link between Marsili and the Ottoman representative. Unfortunately we do not

have a similar image commissioned by the Ottoman dignitary. Thus we will never know whether his sentiments were as bitter as those of Ebu Sehil Nu'man Efendi, or whether he took a more casual approach.

Troublesome technicalities

The technical difficulties of demarcating the border were rather different in 1699 and 1740. In 1740, the course of the Danube was to be the border; this proposition sounded simple, but realization was arduous. There were for example, various islands in the river, which frequently changed their shapes. According to the peace treaty, they were to belong to whichever empire was closest, or in some cases the two powers might prefer to divide the island at issue. Whatever the solution, the two sides had to agree on how they were going to deal with changes of shape that also affected the distances from the relevant river banks. Furthermore the area covered by the cannons of a given fortress was to be part of the latter's territory and belong to whoever held the relevant fortification; this arrangement also meant that one or the other contracting side might hold a bit of territory on the 'enemy' bank.¹⁰⁶ As for the negotiators, even if they hoped for further conquests in the near future, they had to resolve these issues for what was perhaps going to be a long period of peace.

By contrast, Reis Mehmed Efendi/İbrahim Efendi and Count Oettingen/Marsili had to negotiate a border passing through mountainous territory; one of the images commissioned by Marsili did in fact show the negotiators coming together on a rocky outcrop, with a line (marked M in the picture) denoting the border stretching towards the horizon.¹⁰⁷ To show the exact location of the frontier, both commanders mobilized peasants to heap up rocks and cover them with earth. The artificial hills produced by the villagers were called *hunka*; and the latter also played a significant role in Nu'man Efendi's version of events.¹⁰⁸ In one instance, the author even gave a lengthy account of how he had decided on a certain location as suitable for a *hunka* and then insisted that it be placed right there, refusing the Habsburg general's invitation to coffee until the latter had complied with his request.

Marsili, on the other hand, has provided visual information on how *hunkas* might be made more impressive and perhaps more enduring as well: for his set of images contains a group of peasants in their off-white tunics and loose-fitting trousers who bear saplings on their shoulders. A drawing shows these young trees after they had been planted on top of the *hunkas*. The artificial hills were now covered over with earth, whilst larger trees which presumably had been on site for some time already were also incorporated into the border. Nu'man Efendi reported that the rule

was that a person standing on top of one *hunka* must be able to see its neighbours, a rule which presumably was to ensure that people did not inadvertently wander across the border.¹⁰⁹

Maps

Marsili had won international renown as a map-maker, including membership in the Royal Society of England, then as now a major recognition for a scientist; however, his depictions of the middle course of the Danube are not without problems.¹¹⁰ Yet the general liked to stress the importance of his map-making: on the picture showing the three negotiators in conference, a map of the Danube occupies the foreground. Reis Mehmed Efendi – or his subordinate İbrahim – appears to be pointing to it.¹¹¹ But we do not know which maps the Ottoman diplomat had used in his day-to-day work; he may not ever have looked at Marsili's map, preferring the materials produced by his own technicians.

Once again when searching for an Ottoman voice, this time on the question of maps, Nu'man Efendi comes to our rescue. Although by training he was a religious scholar and the last known appointment in his adventurous life was that of a qadi in Manisa, he had also studied geometry, surveying and cartography, priding himself on his ability to find out whether a map accurately pictured realities on the ground. Nu'man Efendi was thus very much aware of the fact that maps could serve to promote territorial claims.¹¹² Modern historians of cartography would heartily agree; after all, current emphasis is on maps as political statements as much as – if not more than – on their role as depictions of the 'real world'.¹¹³

Arrangements for the inhabitants of the borderlands

On both sides of the border peasants tried to make a living, at least if plundering soldiers did not make life impossible. In the Ottoman–Habsburg frontier zone, raiding for booty was common enough, and poorly paid soldiers on both sides made extra money by capturing people and holding them for ransom (see Chapter 3). If the money was not paid – and sometimes even if it had been, as Osman Ağa found out to his intense disgust – these prisoners were sold as slaves.¹¹⁴ In principle, the peace of 1699 foresaw that once hostilities had ended, both sides should return their captives. However, these rules were not always enforced, although by the 1700s the heyday of ransom captivity was a thing of the past.

If Ottomans and Habsburgs hoped to discourage raiding, trade must have seemed a suitable alternative. Marsili told us that he consented to the

demolition of a Habsburg fortification on the Sava because the Ottomans suggested that they would build a commercial town on the spot, which would facilitate the importation of goods from Habsburg into Ottoman territory.¹¹⁵ Thus the erudite general from Bologna knew well that taken by itself, military action to secure the border was insufficient, although as a member of the 'military party' at the imperial court, he certainly wanted Hungary to be rigidly controlled as a starting point for further conquests, if ever the opportunity presented itself. But at the same time, Marsili understood that – as the 'commercial party' at court also emphasized – the Emperor urgently needed to gain support from among the local inhabitants, who showed no great enthusiasm for the rigidly Catholic Habsburg dynasty. Pacification was only possible if people could make a reasonable living.¹¹⁶

Conclusion

By definition, weapons are meant to kill people and animals. But, at the same time, early modern military men ornamented their persons, arms and horses so as to project power and, perhaps by bright colours and eye-catching designs, defy the ever-present images of death, often taking place under the most sordid of circumstances. Ottoman military men were no exception; and thus with some justification the present volume focuses on more or less ceremonial arms that projected power and rank through the value of the materials employed, but also through the elegance of their design.

As for soldiers serving in elite corps, at least when on parade they did not greatly differ from their officers. Dating to the mid 1700s, the 'dress uniform' of a janissary features 'gold' and 'silver' decorations on a dark ground, perhaps a leather coat with an elaborate gilded belt, and a headdress in which gilt metal is also very much in evidence.¹¹⁷ Presumably most artisan-janissaries of Istanbul or Cairo could not afford such costly apparel; but those who could must have impressed their contemporaries just as the uniforms, placed on a stand, continue to impress today.

Ottoman sultans, grandees and palace servants preserved certain kinds of accoutrements including swords, sabres and pistols, while neglecting others; in the palace milieu decorated tents, some of them serving ceremonial rather than military purposes, have also survived. European princes and noblemen collected some pieces also favoured by Ottomans, such as sabres and daggers, or else elegant tents. But they also were interested in items that the Ottoman elite may have regarded as less important, such as the horse-tails discussed here, or janissary uniforms – after all, during the repression following the abolition of the corps in 1826,

such garments could prove quite dangerous to an Ottoman soldier and often must have been discarded.

Archduke Ferdinand apparently wished to document the armour of personages that he considered heroic; members of the Habsburg dynasty occupied centre stage, but the weapons of their French and Ottoman opponents were also part of this early modern version of a military museum. More commonly princes from Latinate Europe might declare the items in their possession as booty to show off their prowess. But often these claims were completely mendacious; and many Ottoman arms and other military gear entered the collections of their non-Ottoman owners as diplomatic gifts. For on some level, the sultans' commanders and their Habsburg or Polish counterparts shared the same early modern military culture; in consequence, such gifts would have not seemed inappropriate, as they doubtless would appear to us inhabitants of the twenty-first century.

Gift-giving, especially when ambassadors were involved, was normally part of a reception that also included a festive meal, an occasion to show the envoy both the wealth and the sophistication of the courtly elite that stage-managed his visit. Therefore our next chapter will deal with food and drink; and as actual remains of courtly meals are virtually non-existent, our access will be through the plates, cups and spoons without which no meal could have been offered or consumed.

CHAPTER 6

EATING AND DRINKING, MOSTLY FROM PRECIOUS OBJECTS

The chase after an elusive authenticity

Given the culture of nostalgia which, in the last few decades, has become part of official and semi-official ideology in Turkey, there have been many attempts to recreate Ottoman elite cuisine, considered the acme of gracious living.¹ In response, a growing number of scholars are also becoming interested in food culture. Apart from edibles and beverages, interest has focused on plates, coffee cups and trays.² However, research on all aspects of Ottoman cuisine is quite difficult: before the mid nineteenth century, cookbooks with recipes of one sort or another are few and far between; and the often fragile dishes, bowls and trays used in serving quality meals have also had a rather low survival rate.

Moreover, even if the ingredients of a given dish have been described, most authors of sixteenth-, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century manuals have not quantified the ingredients which the cook would need to use. Fortunately, a few exceptions do exist: thus the text describing the 1539 festivities in honour of the circumcisions of Princes Bayezid (1525–61) and Cihangir (d. 1552), younger sons of Sultan Süleyman, does contain the amounts of rice, sugar, milk, and fat required for the dishes listed.³ But normally, whenever present-day cooks attempt to prepare a dish described in an Ottoman text, they have to interpret the information given; and frequently it is impossible to come up with a preparation reasonably close to the sixteenth- or eighteenth-century 'original'.⁴

Matters are further complicated by the fact that consumers of the 1600s or even the late nineteenth century had preferences differing sharply from those of our own time. This situation is most apparent when it comes to edible fats: today much cooking is done with vegetable oil; and olive oil is very much a favourite. However, sixteenth-century consumers in Istanbul

seem to have preferred clarified butter.⁵ Olive oil by contrast was in demand mainly for lighting and also for soap manufacture. Nor do we have good data permitting us to chart the growing consumption of olives as a foodstuff, perhaps from the 1800s. Less privileged people probably pressed whatever seeds were locally available; and as older idiomatic expressions indicate, fatty foods were considered desirable. A fifteenth-century author when describing a dish made of coarsely ground wheat suggested the use of sheep-tail fat, presumably from the Karaman sheep especially bred for their heavy fatty tails.⁶ Presumably present-day cooks would prefer different fats when preparing this dish for an elite clientele; and, as a result, all 'Ottoman' dishes cooked today are of necessity adaptations, as modern experts on Ottoman cuisine have been the first to emphasize.⁷

In addition, Ottoman food culture did not remain static even before the great changes of the later 1800s. Thus plants from the Americas entered Ottoman kitchen gardens from the 1600s onward, although nomenclature does not always permit us to follow their progress in an unambiguous manner. Quite commonly the names of these 'immigrant' plants differed from one region to the next, and may also have varied over time, as happened in the case of Indian corn or maize.⁸ In a similar vein, a dictionary published in 1890 calls the tomato *frenk badıncanı* or 'European aubergine'; in the twentieth century, the name has disappeared and this basic ingredient in Turkish cooking is now called *domates*.⁹ A recent study has, moreover, shown that, in the nineteenth century, a fruit resembling the tomato but different in taste was sometimes used in cooking; almost obsolete today, very few greengrocers will bother to supply it.¹⁰

Given the size of the sultans' territories, we need to keep in mind that some American plants might become popular in one Ottoman region but not in others. Thus Evliya Çelebi, the seasoned seventeenth-century traveller, encountered cactus fruit in Egypt, growing on plants which had probably found their way from Mexico into the Mediterranean world; the author called them Frankish figs (*frenk inciri*). But there is only one further and very casual reference in his great travelogue to this particular plant, apparently growing in the vicinity of the Syrian town of Latakiye as well.¹¹ Today this plant is widespread all over the eastern Mediterranean.

As a result, historians of food have discovered that Ottoman cuisine has a history, even though earlier stages of the varied food cultures that flourished in these territories are accessible only to a limited extent. Many problems derive from the fact that – as noted – Ottoman archaeology is in its beginnings and strongly oriented toward matters of art-historical interest. By contrast, where the Ottoman period is concerned, few archaeologists have as yet studied the many domestic garbage dumps,

which must have been located near public baths or theological colleges, and which might provide us with some information about the foods consumed by ordinary people.

Foods granted by the bounty of the sultan

Most Ottoman documentation concerns the sultans' palace.¹² This fact is perhaps less disadvantageous to the present-day historian than might appear at first glance, because a large number of people ate food from the palace kitchen. At major festivities, the number might be so great that the supply of kitchenware did not suffice and the palace needed to borrow from pious foundations and artisan guilds.¹³ In consequence the ruler's kitchens prepared not only fine dishes for the sultan and high dignitaries, but also ordinary foods for a large number of servants. In addition there were the soldiers, who quite frequently received their pay in the second court of the Topkapı Sarayı and were expected to show their loyalty to the monarch by quite literally 'eating his food'. Moreover, by the eighteenth century, the sultans' kitchens also supplied the various married princesses, who lived in their own villas on the Bosphorus but whose cooks processed comestibles received from the Topkapı storehouses.¹⁴ In addition, high dignitaries including the chief jurisconsult (*şeyhülislam*) also benefited from the sultan's bounty; and the foods they received allowed them to save appreciable sums of money on the maintenance of their often large households.¹⁵

To convey an idea of the numbers to be served from the sultan's kitchen, it is worth returning to the record of the circumcisions of Princes Bayezid and Cihangir, as this text tells us how many helpings might be expected from a given quantity of ingredients.¹⁶ As the anonymous author of this account also has also recorded the number of trays required, each one of them to be shared by a certain number of people, he permits us to gain a rough notion of the people invited: 600 trays for the janissaries and other soldiers except for the artillerymen, 600 for the employees of the sultan's stables, the artillerymen, and the artisans/artists under contract with the palace, in addition to another 600 for the city's religious scholars, presumably those of a lower rank. For higher-ranking scholar-officials, the palace had 15 trays prepared, and assigned the same number to the *paşas* and other high dignitaries present at the festival; as a result there were 1,830 trays in all.

However, there is no record of the number of people eating from any given tray; presumably the figures varied, with higher dignitaries eating in smaller groups. In the illustrated festival book of 1720, we find trays serving ten, 11, and 13 persons.¹⁷ If, for the sake of argument, we assume

that ten military men and lower-level religious scholars shared a tray, we arrive at 18,000 people, in addition to perhaps about 100 personages of higher rank. Last but not least, the major sultanic foundations on this occasion passed out food to the poor, but the number of servings remains unknown. On this occasion, the palace kitchen alone probably had to prepare food for over 18,000 persons, a major undertaking even if distributed over a number of days. Last, but not least, the 1539 account does not refer to the feasting that must have taken place in the sultan's harem: for the powerful Hürrem Sultan, mother of the two princes, must have provided banquets or at least sweets to the women in her service.

These varying functions explain why the sultan's kitchen has generated large amounts of paperwork, particularly since many foodstuffs came from quite a distance away. The region of Bursa was a major supplier.¹⁸ Here there was an active 'procurement office': the Keşişdağı Mountain, today called Uludağ, produced snow and ice for the cooling of beverages; the palace also had snow delivered from the mountains of Thessaly.¹⁹ Perhaps the denizens of the palace also enjoyed a mixture of snow and fruit syrups, which Evliya Çelebi noted was popular in Manisa.²⁰ Occasionally the palace kitchens also purchased ice on the markets of Istanbul.²¹

Furthermore the kitchen administration received large amounts of foodstuffs in lieu of taxes. Excused from paying – for instance – the levies known as *avarız-ı divaniye*, often quite burdensome, peasants might need to deliver vegetables, chickens, honey and other edibles; because of this link with taxation, the administration of the palace kitchen kept careful records of the items and quantities delivered. Sometimes peasants had to bring in foods at prices below those demanded in the market 'out of respect for the Sultan', a procedure once again requiring careful record keeping.²² Last, but not least, the kitchen administrators had to supervise the fruit and vegetables grown in the extensive palace gardens: these found their way into a variety of sweet and salty dishes, while the leftovers were sold to Istanbul consumers.

Tastes in the palace were stable in some respects and subject to substantial change in others. Thus in the time of Mehmed the Conqueror (r. 1451–81), shellfish occasionally appeared on the menu, although many Muslims frowned on its consumption and the palace kitchen did not acquire it in later times.²³ On the side of continuity, by contrast, the palace remained a great consumer of chicken, which in the 1600s and also in the 1800s was more expensive than red meat. When the sultan and his grand vizier received European ambassadors, it was customary to treat them to a meal, in which chicken featured prominently. Venetian diplomats often misunderstood this gesture; as chicken was relatively cheap in Italy, they

felt that the choice of this meat was a sign of disrespect.²⁴ Chicken soup often appeared on the menu; and, at very special meals, the elite might dine on partridges and geese. On such occasions, ordinary people would have received mutton, together with a rice dish and sweets.²⁵

By contrast, turkey meat made very rare appearances in the kitchens of the sultans; however, the great feast celebrating the circumcision of the sons of Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) in 1720 was an occasion that demanded this unusual type of poultry.²⁶ But as it turned out, the birds were available only in small numbers, and possibly the sultan never received the numbers of turkeys that his officials had requested. In the early 1800s, turkey meat still did not appear very often at festive palace meals; at that time pigeons, in earlier periods frequently consumed, had become a delicacy served exclusively to distinguished visitors.²⁷ Chickens, however, were a mainstay in the 1800s as in the seventeenth century, with over a thousand of these birds supplied to the sultan's kitchen during a single month in 1832.

On the other hand, turkeys were quite popular in the larger towns of Ottoman Hungary, as archaeologists have found the bones of these birds on the Castle Hill in Buda, but also at Székesféhervár and Vác.²⁸ Moreover, the princes of Transylvania also had large numbers of turkeys reared on their manors. As yet we cannot tell how and through which mediators, the well-to-do of the Ottoman lands became familiar with the consumption of these animals, at least in a festive setting.

Food served up as charity or remuneration

The budgets of public kitchens (*imarets*) also supply occasional information about food. The Ottoman term *imaret* is sometimes translated as 'soup kitchen' or 'a kitchen supplying food to the poor'; for that is its meaning in modern Turkish and also in twentieth-century Bulgaria: the painting *Imaret Djami* by Zlatyu Boyadjiev (1903–76) shows a sizeable number of maimed men among the clientele, presumably war casualties.²⁹ However, detailed studies of the foundation deeds instituting *imarets* have shown that at least the institutions founded by the sultans and their immediate family members often served other categories of people first. As for the poor, they presumably had to make do with what was left after those of greater social status had received their shares. In the *imaret* of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror in Istanbul, the students studying at the eight colleges forming part of that foundation were a major part of the clientele; in addition there were the teachers and a sizeable number of employees, some of middle rank and others of very modest status. In addition, the *imaret* provided for officials who normally worked in the

provinces, but came to the capital on public business, while the widows of deceased officials might receive a daily helping of food – a type of pension paid in kind.³⁰ A similarly high-level clientele seems to have benefited from the Süleymaniye *imaret* in Istanbul and that of Hürrem Sultan, spouse of Süleyman the Magnificent, in Jerusalem. Given claimants with higher standards of consumption, an *imaret* might supply costly spices including pepper, presumably granted by the sultan's largesse.

In the 1500s, prospective clients of an *imaret* needed to prove their entitlements by means of documents, first given out by local foundation administrators and later on by the central financial administration.³¹ It was apparently legitimate to cede these tickets to third parties, presumably against pay; moreover, some people received no meals but only bread, and others were issued money in place of food.³² In the document establishing the *imaret* of Hürrem Sultan, there was quite an elaborate hierarchy of people entitled to benefit from food distribution, with women as the last category.³³ Possibly when food supplies ran short, the people lowest in the founder's estimation sometimes had to leave the queues empty-handed.

As the annual accounts of certain *imarets* specify the foods served, it is possible to say something about 'festive foods' and 'ordinary fare'. Quite a few of the less well-endowed institutions served food only during the nights of Ramadan; and those supplying clients on more a regular basis might serve soup made with rice or crushed wheat. On special occasions, many *imarets* served sweets, a favourite being *zerde*, made with rice and saffron sweetened with grape syrup or honey, or else with sugar if the institution was close to the Ottoman court. For at least in the 1500s, sugar was an item of high luxury, as it was available – in small quantities – only in Egypt and Cyprus; later on it came to the empire as an import purchased from English or French merchants, once again in limited quantities. Baklava was more of a rarity than *zerde*. But in the princely residence of Manisa, it was available even to ordinary townspeople, at least on special occasions, when the *imaret* of Sultan Bayezid in Amasya also treated its clients to a version of this sweet, filled with a mixture of butterfat and honey.³⁴

Throughout the different provinces of the empire, public kitchens tended to serve the same basic dishes; thus the latter may well have played a role in 'Ottomanizing' the lands governed by the sultan, familiarizing provincials with what the authorities in Istanbul considered 'standard fare'. Moreover, travellers from the central provinces arriving in a strange city, for instance Damascus when waiting for the pilgrimage caravan to depart, would have encountered 'familiar food' in an *imaret* sponsored by the ruling dynasty. They might thus have concluded that, no matter how strange and unfamiliar the place, they were still within the sultan's dominions.³⁵

Foods eaten by ordinary people

According to the records of the 1539 circumcision, the poor of Istanbul were to get a rice dish known as *dane*, perhaps white pilaf flavoured with a sprinkling of pepper. In addition these needy folk received a helping of *zerde*.³⁶ In the mid sixteenth century, rice, pepper and saffron were probably minor luxuries even for the comfortably-off: rice was cultivated in northern-central Anatolia and also in the Balkans; but the quantities available for sale may well have been modest.³⁷ Honey was not in ample supply either; although perhaps the cheaper grape syrup flavoured the *zerde* served to the poor. Saffron, moreover, is an expensive condiment even today; but in northern Anatolia it may have been a local product. In all likelihood, for poor people, *dane* and *zerde* would have been something really special.

We do not have lists of the foods which public kitchens served to the poor on a regular basis; and maybe the many destitute people lacking entitlements ate worse than even the most modest employees of pious foundations.³⁸ As for people well-off without being super-rich, we possess a few studies on the diary of a seventeenth-century dervish by the name of Seyyid Hasan, who apparently could survive at least for a couple of years without regular paid employment.³⁹ This person seems to have liked his food; and even in moments of crisis, when one of his wives lay dying, he took a moment to note the cheese and fruit at his disposal. Nor did he forget to show his appreciation to the cook for the quality of the sweets prepared for the people attending the funeral.

When friends visited under happier circumstances, Seyyid Hasan often listed the dishes appearing on the food-tray (*sini*); and, as the latter might be rather well stocked, presumably people with some resources did not necessarily content themselves with the diet of bread, garlic, yoghurt and vegetables that foreign observers often considered the standard fare of the ordinary Ottoman subject.⁴⁰ Or perhaps even frugal people served up more luxurious food when expecting guests.

Seyyid Hasan's diary refers to a single family during a relatively short period; but to approach the historian's old favourite, namely 'continuity and change', experts on Ottoman cuisine have compared cookery books from different periods.⁴¹ Thus we possess an Arabic text on foods and medicines, originally composed in the thirteenth century and in the 1400s, translated into Turkish by Muhammed b. Mahmud Şirvânî. Rather haphazardly, the translator has added 71 dishes, perhaps considering it unnecessary to provide a more formal presentation; his readers probably knew the dishes in question.⁴² Some of the names recorded in this text recur in cookery books of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

However, this does not necessarily mean that the recipe in question survived unchanged: certainly some dishes retained popularity over the *longue durée* and even continue to be well liked down to the present day. But, in other cases, the same term may have come to denote completely different dishes: the historian of Ottoman cookery can never be too careful!

Coffee and coffee houses

Coffee had been indigenous to Ethiopia and Yemen throughout the middle ages; and it is still somewhat enigmatic why, in the sixteenth century, it spread beyond these regions, first to Mecca and Egypt and within short order to Istanbul, Anatolia, and the Balkans.⁴³ Yet the dissemination of coffee within the sultans' territories was remarkably rapid: for in the 1590s, it was already available in outlying towns and villages of northern Anatolia.⁴⁴ Returning Mecca pilgrims may have helped to diffuse it; but sources for this are at a premium.

In the seventeenth century some sultans attempted to prohibit coffee consumption and, even more pertinently, the coffee houses that were turning into gathering places where people might discuss all kinds of topics including high politics, which members of the Ottoman elite (just like their counterparts in early eighteenth-century France) regarded as unsuitable for ordinary folk. It is still uncertain to what extent the arguments of certain religious scholars, who categorized coffee like wine and other forbidden substances, induced rulers like Murad IV (r.1623–40) to try and stamp out the new fashion. Possibly politics reinforced religious scruples; for this sultan built an alliance with the Kadızadeliler, a group that stridently opposed any innovation that had occurred since the time of the Prophet Muhammad.⁴⁵ Moreover, while Murad IV died in 1640 and the Kadızadeliler temporarily lost power in the following years, latter-day avatars of this group were influential in the sultans' palace throughout the 1600s.

As for bans of coffee consumption, we are left to speculate to what extent they were enforced outside of Istanbul. Thus Evliya Çelebi, who in his youth had been a page of the rabidly anti-coffee Sultan Murad IV, did not hesitate to describe the local coffee houses in his mid-seventeenth-century description of Bursa.⁴⁶ Similarly, application in Aleppo may have been spotty to say the least: for already in 1653, a local governor built an elaborate coffee house to provide revenue for his pious foundation.⁴⁷ Thus not only the *paşa*, but also the religious scholars to whom he doubtless turned for advice, must have viewed coffee and coffee houses as legally permissible. Moreover, they presumably did not anticipate a future closing of coffee houses; for had matters been different,

these establishments would have been lacking in permanence and thus unacceptable as a revenue source for a pious foundation.

Yet even in times of prohibition, clandestine sales of coffee doubtless continued, and it is also worth thinking about why and how these bans so quickly lost validity. The scholarly Kâtip Çelebi (1609–57) seems to have felt that, without grave reasons, it was a bad idea to add to the many prohibitions already in existence.⁴⁸ But we do not know whether it was such considerations that prompted moderation, or else a concern with the payments that the tax farmers operating coffee-roasting equipment (*tahmis-i kahve*) and collecting dues from shops – including those selling coffee – made to the central treasury. Moreover, the coffee traders of Cairo were rich men, who may well have induced office-holders operating in Egypt to refrain from hindering their trade.⁴⁹ Last, but not least, grand viziers changed frequently and some seventeenth-century sultans also had short reigns. Rulers and administrators regarding the prohibition of coffee as an effective means of social control might soon be supplanted by others who saw this issue as peripheral.

While by the later 1500s coffee was well established in the Ottoman heartlands, we do not know very much about modes of preparation during this early period, as the elaborate rituals surrounding this beverage in later centuries were probably still in emergence. But the financial aspect is relatively clear: by the 1600s, Istanbul had become the centre from which all coffee aficionados took their cue, as prices in the Ottoman capital determined the amount of money that consumers all over the empire would have to pay.⁵⁰

Doubtless the current popularity of Ottoman coffee houses as a research topic is connected to debates about the possible origins of civil society in the sultans' domains, a social space separate both from people's family lives and from the shops and workshops in which they made a living.⁵¹ Coffee houses provided an ambience in which males could talk or attend performances, without being limited by the rules of *bienséance* valid in shops, dervish lodges or mosque courtyards. Cengiz Kırılı has found that in certain parts of Istanbul around 1800, coffee shops were the most numerous of all enterprises – comparable to the pubs on every street corner so typical of nineteenth-century London.

(PLATE 26) COFFEE CUPS

Manufacturers of good-quality faience cups in the Ottoman lands often used Chinese export porcelain as models (see Chapter 1). However, Chinese pieces destined for the sultans' territories featured motifs that merchants knew to be readily marketable in an Islamic context. Thus, as

noted, the porcelain that Ottoman artisans got to view and copy may well have been quite different from items destined for consumers in China.

Perhaps inspired by the marks they must have seen on imported Chinese porcelain, some Ottoman manufacturers or merchants placed workshop stamps on locally made faience.⁵² Thus the bottoms of certain Kütahya coffee cups show writing in Arabic script that has occasioned considerable debate among specialists: for one such inscription, current scholarship has suggested the reading 'Sivaz', but it is assumed that the pieces in question actually came from Kütahya, and not from the northern Anatolian town of Sivas. But Garo Kürkman has proposed that the enigmatic writing should instead be read as 'Ayvaz'. Moreover, Kürkman proposes that 'Sivaz/Ayvaz' was not the name of the manufacturer, but that of the merchant who had ordered the cup.⁵³ On these issues, only specialists will dare to express an opinion.

Master-journeyman conflict in the workshops of Kütahya

A few faience coffee cups were of İznik manufacture, but the vast majority was not, if only because the production of İznik ware declined precipitously in the 1600s, when coffee drinking became widespread. The town of Kütahya in western Anatolia, where most cups apparently came from, had already produced faience in the 1500s and continues to do so even today. Much of our written evidence, such as it is, comes from two eighteenth-century records in the local qadi registers.⁵⁴ In 1764, 34 masters and 69 journeymen, all Armenians with the lone exception of a single Muslim, were active in the manufacture of coffee cups. Previously there had been a dispute between journeymen and masters, a kind of conflict that otherwise only rarely made it into Ottoman records. At issue was the wage question: according to the surviving document, the journeymen accepted a payment of 60 *akçe* for a day's work, which was to be equivalent to the turning of 100 cups on the wheel, neither more nor less – apparently decoration and subsequent firing were not the responsibility of these men. Masters and journeymen also promised to not set up extra pottery wheels in their homes.

This contract did not end the dispute; for two years later there was an amendment setting differential wages payable to the journeymen, according to the raw material with which they had to work. Now the number of journeymen mentioned was much smaller; but the document does not explain this discrepancy. Perhaps the men not mentioned in the agreement continued to be paid a standard rate, or some of them may even have left town. We can only hope that, in the future, complementary records will help us to better understand conflicts in urban workshops.

(PLATE 27) A 'PLACE MAT' FOR THE FOOD-TRAY,
OR HOW TO SERVE A MEAL

Coffee is one of the joys of life; but food is essential. Before the late 1800s or early 1900s, the sultan's subjects ate their meals sitting on the floor; at banquets sponsored by the Ottoman Palace, low stools might be set out for ambassadors, and certain dignitaries ate while sitting on the low dais known as *sedir*, with the food placed on a tray supported by a stand.⁵⁵ This tray, usually round and known as a *sini*, normally was of copper. It might also be placed on the floor; in that case a 'place mat' of leather (*sofra*), also round and more or less elaborately decorated, cushioned the tray from the ground.

Both the *sini* and the 'place mat' underneath could become ornaments in their own right; for a metal tray could be engraved, while the round leather mat might be decorated with multi-coloured designs, also in leather and mostly floral. Not many items of this kind have survived; for copper is easy to recycle and thus most extant 'old' pieces only date to the nineteenth century. Leather 'place mats' are even less common. But an example exists in the Topkapı Palace Museum and a few others are on view in foreign collections. Ambras Castle near Innsbruck in Austria possesses an example from the sixteenth century, while a rather large and sumptuous piece has ended up in the National Museum of Ravenna (Italy).⁵⁶

These pieces all feature designs finely cut out of multicoloured leather, with appliqué work rather similar to that appearing on the tents of *grandees* (see Chapter 5). Fine leatherwork was a medium permitting ostentation, all the more since the restrictions of Islamic law which limit the use of silk and precious metals did not concern this material. Elaborately ornamented leather even covered a dome in a chamber of the harem forming part of the Topkapı Palace.⁵⁷ High-quality works in leather thus were authentic luxuries and carriers of prestige, not to be confused with the boots and saddles that 'ordinary' people used and by which an 'ordinary' artisan tried to make a living.

(PLATE 28) FESTIVE PLATES – AND WHAT THEY MIGHT CONTAIN

The contents of a food-tray

Artistically decorated food trays and their 'place mats' continue to delight and impress; but what kind of food was an Ottoman subject of some means likely to find on them? We will have to approach our topic obliquely, namely through the dishes in which foods were served, once again with particular attention to festive contexts.

Presumably no meal was complete without bread; and in addition, we will – albeit briefly – discuss porridges and meat. Baked in a baker's oven,

at least by the 1700s, loaves of bread were a basic food in large Ottoman cities, while in the countryside flatbreads that could be cooked on an open fire were probably more widespread. In Istanbul during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the number of people who prepared bread at home was apparently quite negligible. At least in the eyes of officialdom, mills and bakeries were closely associated, with the flour produced by a given mill going to the corresponding bakery; and sales of flour to the public seem to have been a minor matter.⁵⁸ However, in Cairo, customs and regulations were quite different; and in the 1670s or early 1680s, Evliya Çelebi noted that in this city, wealthy people had baking ovens in their houses, and even the poor often made arrangements for home baking. In addition, women might sell bread, a custom all but unthinkable in Istanbul.⁵⁹

Ever since the sixteenth century, both the provisioning of the Ottoman capital with grain and the ensuing sales of bread were subject to tight regulation; and the payments due for different types of bread and other baked goods were a principal item in Istanbul lists of administratively determined prices.⁶⁰ The wealthy tended to prefer a white bread known as *francala*; however, during scarcities, for instance in the years before and after 1800, the baking of *francala* was forbidden, with only the bakeries supplying foreign embassies allowed an exception.⁶¹ According to Evliya, people with the necessary resources could purchase bread enriched with a variety of seeds, including aniseed and sesame; and those who really wished to splurge – or impress their neighbours – could enrich their bread with a liquid seasoned with exotic spices, such as cinnamon and cloves.⁶²

Porridge was a cheaper alternative to bread. When in a caravanserai on his way to Istanbul, the Habsburg diplomat and travelogue writer Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1522–91), ambassador of the Habsburg ruler Ferdinand I to Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–66), recounted being offered a tray of food, the centrepiece of which was a bowl of barley porridge.⁶³ At first, he was not enthusiastic and only tasted this dish so as to not seem impolite toward his hosts. But once he had eaten, he found it quite tasty, so presumably it contained condiments of some kind. Evliya Çelebi recorded a variety of such foods, some of them based on millet, which went under the names of *potga*, *pasda* and *lapa*; one of these foods, called Circassian-style *pasda*, was flavoured with cheese. *Herise* and *keşkek*, the former often served to Mecca pilgrims, were other varieties of porridge.⁶⁴ By contrast Evliya did not say much about pilaf made of roughly ground wheat (bulgur), today a very popular dish; perhaps he did not care for it, or else it was not often consumed, at least not under that name.

Eating meat was a privilege to which even low-level servitors of the Ottoman administration aspired; and, as a result, wealthy people in the Balkans were obliged to bring fixed numbers of sheep to Istanbul, which they then sold to the butchers. In the 1500s, Istanbul butchers quite often went bankrupt, as the prices they could charge did not cover costs; but toward the end of the century, the Ottoman authorities instituted a special tax picturesquely named 'the butchers' losses' (*zarar-ı kassabiye*) which subsidized the meat rations of the janissaries, through revenue especially generated for this purpose. Thus by the later seventeenth century, we do not hear many complaints from butchers about to go bankrupt.⁶⁵ Most of the meat consumed was mutton; yet for people who could not afford red meat, the consumption of a limited quantity of animal protein was still possible. Thus Evliya noted the consumption of meat on the skulls of sheep, lambs and cattle, not only in Istanbul, but also in distant Erçeyş, a town which has been swallowed up by Lake Van and replaced by today's Erciş. Here the traveller recorded the presence of a spring, whose water was so hot that picnickers placed their sheep and cattle skulls in it; soon they were ready for an *al fresco* meal.⁶⁶

Another source of affordable animal protein was known as *paça*, a gelatinous dish made from the trotters of sheep and often offered to newly-weds, just after their marriage. In large cities specialized artisans (*paçacı*) prepared this food, but housewives could also produce it at home: in 1720, the wives of blacksmiths working for the naval arsenal received permission to make and sell *paça*, over the protests of the *paçacı*s. By this special permit, the administration tried to ensure that the need to provide for their families would not distract the blacksmiths from their service to the navy.⁶⁷ There were local varieties of *paça*; and the cook could flavour the dish by adding garlic and vinegar.⁶⁸

Travellers staying in a caravanserai, and perhaps also artisans and shopkeepers whose house was inconveniently distant from their place of work, might also buy their roast meat in a kebab shop. A miniature from the 1580s shows an establishment quite familiar to the denizens of the twenty-first century: the meat cooks in an oven, while the owner of the cookshop and/or his assistants have prepared a table and bench for the customers. As for the meat, it has been set out on small spits supported by a stand, presumably for the customers to take their pick. However, this image does not show a 'real' shop, but rather a scene set out on a cart for the amusement of the sultan, his court, and the Istanbul population; thus it is likely that actual cookshops were somewhat less clean and orderly.⁶⁹

Elite figures outside of palace circles presumably had regular access to the more expensive varieties of meat as well; but in the absence of figures on household consumption, it is impossible to be more specific.

Chinese–Ottoman connections

From the *sini*, the *sofra* and the bread and meat served, we will now move on to the dishes. Before the eighteenth century, no true porcelain was produced outside of East Asia; apart from the colourful Japanese *imari* porcelain and its Chinese counterparts, much of the ware exported to the Middle East was blue-and-white (see Chapter 1).⁷⁰ Many Ottoman faience plates also featured these two colours, although İznik artisans certainly produced plates, jugs and bowls in other colours as well. Apart from purple and sage green, which remained in fashion for relatively short periods, by the mid sixteenth century, İznik producers had developed a unique tomato red which, for about half a century, between the mid 1500s and the years around 1600, became the ‘trademark’ of İznik manufacture.⁷¹

But the popularity of multicoloured faience did not by any means involve the eclipse of blue-and-white. As previously noted a popular design involved clusters of grapes together with their leaves; it was of Chinese origin, an example in porcelain surviving in the Topkapı Palace Museum.⁷² Innumerable variations of this motif decorate İznik faience. Among other Chinese-inspired designs, patrons were most likely to favour bands that vaguely resembled clouds (‘Chinese cloud design’), peonies and scalloped rims. The famous *çintamani* design, featuring groups of ‘balls’ separated by wavy bands, which we find not only on Ottoman ceramics but also on textiles, had originated in Asian religious practices as well.

Using dishes . . .

Apart from the Ottoman Palace, very little evidence survives on how people made use of the valuable ceramics that they had purchased or inherited. We do not know if people ate from them and, if so, how often. After all, even today, many households own porcelain that the owners rarely use and mostly keep in a display cabinet. Perhaps the lucky proprietors of İznik faience placed their precious pieces in the niches featuring prominently in the reception rooms of their houses, which allowed Ottoman personages of rank to display their treasures.

On the miniatures showing court-sponsored festivities, blue-and-white ware sometimes appeared; thus the dignitaries treated to a meal by Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) in 1720, at the circumcision of his sons, clearly ate from such valuable pieces; unfortunately we cannot see whether the palace stewards had brought out İznik ware, which was already about 100 or 150 years old at that time, and may well have counted as an antique.⁷³ But the pieces in question may also have been Chinese originals.

While eating out of a common dish was the rule, in certain settings individual bowls also might be used – or at least we gain this impression from a sixteenth-century illustration of a biography of the Prophet Muhammad (*siyer-i nebi*) that showed the wedding of the Prophet's daughter Fâtima and his relative Imâm 'Alî – or at least the male side of these celebrations.⁷⁴ While the Prophet stood by, a man from his entourage, with his sleeves rolled up, served food from a kettle, while the guests held out large and small bowls. While most of the latter were evidently of metal, at least one of them may also have been of earthenware. Obviously it was the artist's aim to show a miracle of the Prophet Muhammad, namely the repast for a multitude coming out of a single, modestly sized receptacle; and an accurate depiction of the vessels used was not part of his plan. Even worse, it is also possible that the artist was not thinking of an elite party at all, but of a group of beggars hoping for alms from the charity of the Prophet.

... and offering fruit and sweets

Next, we will discuss sweet dishes, which had an especially prominent place at festive meals and were likely to be served on porcelain and high-quality faience. After all, sugar was a rarity before the eighteenth century, and local supplies of honey also were limited.⁷⁵ However, Ottoman subjects evidently were connoisseurs of honey, as apparent from the many varieties occurring in Evliya Çelebi's great travelogue.⁷⁶

Sometimes those sweets, which could be bought ready-made in the market, are on record in the registers of administratively determined prices (*narh*), at least in an indirect fashion. The most explicit document of this type, covering Istanbul in 1640, mentions special trays for baklava along with their prices. This entry shows that a certain number of households made this relatively costly sweet often enough to require special implements.

Dried fruit was popular even among modest people, including travellers. Thus Busbecq noted that dried figs, cornel cherries, peaches, pears and prunes served as condiments to be eaten with bread.⁷⁷ If sugar, grape syrup or honey were at hand, it was also possible to make preserves; for these and other sweets, the ten-volume travelogue of Evliya Çelebi is a major source.⁷⁸ As apparent from the many entries devoted to fruit and sweet dishes, the author was especially interested in this subject: we may wonder to what extent this attention to sweets was his personal preference, or else a typical feature of seventeenth-century elite food culture. Be that as it may, the blue-and-white jars of porcelain or İznik ware found in certain wealthy dwellings served, at least in part, to store

dried fruits and fruit preserves, thus supporting our contention that these accessories of a pleasurable life were closely connected.⁷⁹

The diffusion of tableware

Plates and cups 'made in İznik' circulated within and outside the Ottoman domains. There are even a few items carrying the arms of European families, made to special order, although, intriguingly, the patrons remain unknown.⁸⁰ Moreover, John Zápolya (r. 1526–40), who after the battle of Mohács ruled Hungary as a protégé of Sultan Süleyman, also possessed fine İznik ware, which may have arrived as diplomatic gifts, or else as trade goods.⁸¹ It is less obvious who had purchased the vessels of İznik ware whose fragments today can be found in the storehouses of museums in southern Italy.⁸² Presumably, these sales to wealthy outsiders helped İznik potters to survive for a few more years after the Ottoman Palace had lost interest in quality faience dishes.

Yet as long as İznik production flourished, it was mostly members of the Ottoman elite who delighted in luxury faience from the kilns of this town. Hungarian scholars have found some pieces when excavating Ottoman-held fortresses; however, the quantities were not enormous, and thus it seems that only people of high status, perhaps officers, could acquire such items. Buda Castle has yielded quite a collection of broken İznik-ware; after all, the previous seat of the Hungarian monarchs had, by the mid 1500s, become the residence of an Ottoman governor.⁸³ But Hungary was not the only outlying province where excavations have yielded fragments of this type.⁸⁴ Boeotia, a region rather remote from the centres of wealth and political power, has yielded – once again rather small – quantities of İznik shards; perhaps these vessels had once been the pride and joy of the holder of a rural domain, called *çiftlik* in Ottoman parlance.⁸⁵ Excavations of the Agora in Athens also have yielded only tiny quantities; but in the sixteenth century, this town was small and provincial, so that it is noteworthy that even a vessel or two had arrived in this place.⁸⁶ Surely the town of Salamis was even more remote from the centres of Ottoman power: but attached to the local church of Panaghia Phaneromeni, there survives a fine blue-and-white İznik plate from the first half of the sixteenth century.⁸⁷ In addition, the officers commanding the garrisons in castles like Akkerman and Özü, which secured the northern frontier, also enjoyed some İznik ware as well as original Chinese porcelain. A photograph of the Akkerman finds shows that the İznik blue-and-white shards featured designs resembling those of authentic Chinese porcelain also present on site.⁸⁸ Given these finds, Caroline Finkel has suggested that the time has now arrived for a synthesis, which may allow

us to explain the distribution of faience and porcelain in the empire's former provinces, often far distant from one another but linked by commerce and gift-exchanges.⁸⁹

The makers of the İznik dish shown here, in blue and white, were also clearly familiar with Chinese designs, which, however, they did not simply copy but used as a source of inspiration. In addition, this piece had a more specific 'ancestor', namely porcelain made in China but for a Portuguese customer, and bearing the arms of the king of Portugal Manuel I (r. 1495–1521). John Carswell has deduced this remarkable design history by comparison with a piece in the Topkapı Sarayı Museum; for the uninitiated, the 'European connection' is only apparent from the decorative shield meant to hold a coat of arms. On the other hand, the armillary sphere, also part of the Portuguese royal arms, has turned into two bands filled with hatching, and thus is no longer easily recognized. The two other roundels hold local motifs, namely highly stylized buildings in a landscape.⁹⁰

(PLATE 29) SPOONS OF WOOD AND PRECIOUS MATERIALS

Ottoman diners ate quite a few foods with their hands, presumably using a piece of bread to prevent stains on napkins and clothing. As food appeared in a dish in the centre of the *sini*, the people sharing a meal used long-handled spoons to reach the food without disturbing their neighbours; for the early eighteenth-century miniatures by Abdülcélil Levni (d. 1732) give the impression that people might sit rather close together.⁹¹ An anecdote from the dervish milieu, relayed by the satirical author Aziz Nesin (1915–95) in his memoirs, seems to reflect a similar situation: the text focuses on the advice of a senior dervish that the best way to eat without troubling one's neighbours is to feed the person seated opposite, and wait for the latter to reciprocate. Unfortunately, we do not know when and where this story had originated, or whether this mutual feeding was ever practised in real-life dervish lodges.⁹²

On Levni's miniatures, there is no evidence of people bringing knives to the *sofra*; so meat must have been served already cut up into small pieces. But at an elaborate meal, spoons were a favoured object of elegant display. Among his other information on food and food-ways, Evliya has left us an impressive list of the materials from which spoons might be made, including the wood of the cornel cherry, the olive, the plum and the walnut tree. More recherché materials included agate, tortoiseshell and amber, as well as mother of pearl and coconut shell.⁹³ Some pieces were veritable products of the jeweller's art: thus the travelogue writer mentioned coral, by which he may have meant that the spoon in question had a handle made out of this bright red and costly material.

Yet other pieces Evliya described as set with precious stones, including rubies and emeralds. Spoons especially meant for eating fruit compote (*hoşab*) seem to have been favoured candidates for such decoration, either because they were smaller than others, or else because *hoşab*, being a sweet dish, enjoyed particular esteem.

Few spoons dating from before the 1800s have come down to us; and even when they have, it is not easy to determine the period of manufacture, especially in the absence of decoration. Therefore the spoons in the Ambras Castle Museum are of special interest, as they appear in inventories dated to 1596 and 1666; moreover, the curators think that stylistic considerations allow us to assign even the items only recorded in 1666 to the sixteenth century.⁹⁴ Five of the six Ambras spoons have elaborate gilding and colourful decoration, one of them featuring tulips and carnations on a green ground. Another piece bears a pious inscription; unfortunately there is no hint of the previous possessor.

Spoons were indispensable for eating soups and stews; thus after discussing bread, porridge, meat, fruits and sweets, we will conclude with the many types of soup that might appear on an Ottoman *sofra*. Once again, Evliya's account shows the numerous ingredients that might enter the soup pot. First of all, grains and pulses might make a nourishing pottage and, apart from 'regular' wheat, we encounter less common grains such as rice, millet or immature wheat (*firik*).⁹⁵ Various pastes made of grain were also in use; and, among pulses, the author listed lentils and black-eyed peas. As for vegetable concoctions, Evliya mentioned that old central European standby, namely cabbage soup. In addition, foodstuffs containing animal proteins also found their way into quite a few soup-pots, so as to make economical use of various kinds of fish, pieces of meat, and of course yoghurt alone, or in combination with other foods. Remarkably, Evliya encountered chicken soup, a dish about which he otherwise had little to say, of all places in the remote fortress of Harkova on the east coast of Africa, on his way toward the province of Habeş.⁹⁶

As an afterthought, it is worth noting that other tableware might also be made of wood. Plates from this material were very modest, everyday objects, which even a poor person might own; and some archaeologists have regarded the absence of pottery in southern Greece during the early modern period, and its probable replacement by wooden receptacles, as a sign of impoverishment.⁹⁷ However, in the Ottoman world, whether wood was cheap or expensive would have depended on the location; in northern Anatolia, for instance, wood was and is relatively abundant, while in Egypt, many kinds of wood were imports and thus fairly dear. As a result, in quite a few places, wooden objects might become decorative items; and the late sixteenth-century catalogue of the collections of the

Habsburg Archduke Ferdinand II (1529–95) refers to several wooden plates with colourful painted decorations. Two of these items, once again displayed in their original location in Ambras Castle, have survived to the present day.⁹⁸ As the plates were probably never used, the colours are still quite brilliant, especially on the downsides; they feature variations of the *çintamani* motif. More faded, the upper sides have been ornamented with the carnations and tulips at that time virtually ubiquitous in Ottoman decorations.

Conclusion

In the world at large, food and implements used in the preparation and consumption of edibles are at once very stable and very open to ideas from foreign cultures. Stability implies that certain dishes remained popular over the centuries, in a specific region or maybe in the central Ottoman provinces as a whole. To give a few examples: in the 1600s, people prepared soup out of tripe or the yoghurt-based paste known as *tarhana*, and flavoured their soups with lemon juice, as they still do today. Dishes made of immature wheat (*firik*) existed in Evliya's time, and they are still – or once again – on offer in the restaurants of Istanbul. In the 1600s, baklava was a festive dish and halva available in many places; and the same things are still widely sold today. When it came to serving foods, the basic rules also did not change very much before the late nineteenth century. In this sense, stability also involved a certain lack of interest in new foods and food-ways reaching the empire from the outside world.

However, we must not exaggerate stability, and imagine an Ottoman elite society all but impervious to new products and fashions. First of all, American plants and – to a lesser extent – the turkey, did interest well-to-do consumers.⁹⁹ We have had occasion to note that in 1720, the palace desired these birds, which have the advantage of producing numerous servings of meat from a single animal. Similarly the – probably Mexican – cactus had arrived in Egypt by the later 1600s, although the empire's inhabitants – as has often happened in other contexts as well – were not too sure about the origins of this plant. The latter might be called 'Frankish' but also 'Indian' fig, but as the fruit doubtless did not have much appeal, it also went by the name of 'donkey's fig'.¹⁰⁰

Furthermore there were importations of fruit trees from India, which probably did best in the hot climate of Egypt, provided the growers were able to water their plants. Evliya believed that bananas (*mevz*; today: *muz*) had originated in the Hejaz, but probably they had arrived from India, perhaps after transiting through the pilgrimage cities. By Evliya's time, bananas also grew in the vicinity of Beirut, where the author seems to

have observed how the ripe fruit emerged in 'wheel-shaped' bunches, providing a lively description of their appearance and recommending that they be eaten with sugar.¹⁰¹ Evliya also described the cultivation of cassia fistula (*hıyar-ı şembe*) trees in Egypt, another import from South Asia; and he had a long story to tell about the manner in which the Ottoman sultans monopolized the sale of this fruit, which seems to have served as a purgative.¹⁰²

In addition, we should take regional exchanges into account. Given the limited means of communication, popular dishes like halva had a large number of local variants, as apparent from the long list compiled from Evliya Çelebi's great travelogue.¹⁰³ Especially in Istanbul, where people from different parts of the empire converged, there must have been some exchange of food customs, hopefully the subject of future research.

There was also the great novelty of coffee. Before the mid 1500s, the plant was limited to Yemen and Ethiopia, both of these territories being, at least in part, possessions of the sultan. However, Ottoman control in both cases was limited to the coastlands and a few major towns; and, furthermore, Yemen was lost again in the 1630s. Thus coffee drinking was indeed largely a novelty from the outside world and, for the time being, a more important one than the consumption of some American maize or Indian bananas. Moreover, drinking coffee soon involved the use of coffee cups, and this custom resulted in the revitalization of – albeit indirect – connections to China. Thus while the overall picture is one of stability, when we take a closer look, the better-off Ottoman consumer of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries quite significantly enhanced his/her material culture by contacts with the outside world. In the next chapter we will see that Ottoman clothing also involved a stock of stable local traditions, which elite consumers enhanced by importing fabrics and fashions from outside the borders of the sultans' empire.

CHAPTER 7

PILES AND PILES OF TEXTILES AND LEATHERS

In our quest for objects passing from the Ottomans to the outside world, and from the latter to the former, garments of fabric and leather are promising candidates. Polish noblemen bought silks and velvets from Bursa, Istanbul or Damascus, while Russian tsars and dignitaries of the Russian Orthodox Church received them as gifts, and the noblemen of Moldavia and Wallachia favoured them as well.¹ Moreover, ateliers in Poland, often initiated by Ottoman Armenians, imitated Safavid- or Ottoman-style sashes, which formed part of the outfits worn by early modern Polish noblemen.² In Russia, Ottoman luxury crafts also gave rise to reworkings and selective appropriations of Ottoman designs, especially apparent among gold- and silversmiths who worked for the tsars' court.³ Moreover, in the 1700s, clothing 'in the Turkish style' became fashionable especially in central Europe, and some imitations were of reasonable quality.

Furthermore, Ottoman fashions in textiles and ornament were open to design ideas from East and West, although the basic shapes and configurations of garments remained much the same over the early modern centuries. Indian cottons both plain and printed had been available in Egypt already during Mamlūk times; and, in the 1600s and early 1700s, they became so fashionable that they helped ensure the prosperity of Cairo's traders.⁴ Some of the fine, translucent fabrics depicted in eighteenth-century Ottoman miniatures probably were either imports from India or else imitations of Indian fabrics produced in the Ottoman lands. As for Iranian textiles on the Ottoman market, research is still very much in its infancy; and the similarity of certain designs to those of local make renders it difficult to gauge the level of imports.⁵ In any case, the Ottoman ambassador Dürri Ahmed Efendi, who visited Iran in 1720, was

quite impressed by Iranian textile production.⁶ During this period, both Ottoman and European imagery show that certain Western fashions also were attracting attention among members of the Ottoman elite.⁷

The uses of textiles and leather

In any pre-industrial society, the manufacture of textiles was a major branch of activity, undertaken by full-time weavers, or else by peasants and housewives, working whenever their other chores left them some time. Many textiles served 'home decoration', in other words pieces of cloth were in use as bedding, rugs and curtains, particularly important as, before the 1800s, Ottoman houses contained no beds or chairs. Furthermore, there were the clothes on people's backs: the post-mortem inventories of men and women that had lived in the sultans' realm survive in relatively large numbers (see the Introduction), enumerating caftans, shirts, sashes, turbans, and veils made of cotton, silk, linen or wool. According to the wealth of the deceased, and his or her status in society, these items would have been more or less elaborate.⁸

Leather is a crucial semi-finished material in any society without rubber or synthetics, but was especially so in the Ottoman world. Skins and hides for tanning were readily available: for in steppe and mountainous lands, where agriculture was not too productive, villagers and/or nomads and semi-nomads grazed mostly sheep and goats, but also cattle, while the reeds in Anatolian marshes fed buffaloes. Tanned and dyed according to technologies that have in part survived into the twentieth century, by the 1600s different kinds of leather were known by the names of towns.⁹ However, references to certain towns may have become 'brand names', in other words some of these leathers may have been manufactured elsewhere, *à la façon de Manisa* or, much later, of Safranbolu.

Clothing regulations for men and women

Similarly to their counterparts in early modern Europe, the Ottoman authorities assumed that what a person wore on the street should make his status clearly visible: a Muslim, Christian, or Jew should be recognizable from his headgear and shoes, and often from the colour of his cloak as well.¹⁰ Distinctive clothing was to show that Muslims were 'first-class' subjects, and the non-Muslims their inferiors. Therefore non-Muslims were not to dress like Muslims – except for certain categories enjoying special dispensation, for instance non-Muslim doctors in the service of the palace, or foreign subjects while en route. Travellers needed exemptions

because only a man in Muslim attire could bear arms; and many areas were dangerous to traverse for those without some weaponry. Muslims on the other hand, were not to imitate foreign 'infidel' fashions.¹¹

Where women were concerned, the rule was simply that they should be completely covered; and, in the view of elite males, in an ideal world they would have been invisible. This attitude meant that ladies existing in the real world, as opposed to literary figures such as the heroines of Nizāmī's poetry, were a rarity in Ottoman imagery. Differently from what happened at the Mughal court, and the palaces of other Muslim princes of India, there were no portrait-like depictions, no matter how stylized, of powerful women, and the 'portraits' occasionally painted by Italian artists are pure fantasy. The works of the painter Levni, who in the early eighteenth century did produce a few detailed depictions of Iranian and Bursa women, are thus quite exceptional; and we have but few opportunities for judging the accuracy of his depictions of female attire.¹²

In the 1700s and 1800s, women were subjected to a host of sartorial regulations targeting cloaks and veils worn outdoors, apparently with the intention of preventing even slight variations from established patterns.¹³ However, restrictions only applied to publicly visible streetwear. Unlike in early modern Bologna, for example, there was no effort to gather evidence on – much less to regulate – what women wore in their homes, or those of their friends.¹⁴ In fact, it seemingly reflected positively on a family if its female members owned earrings, rings, and silk dresses, although, apart from close relatives, only other women would ever have seen them. But presumably female friends and neighbours reported on clothing and jewellery; and even if their male relatives disparaged such observations as mere gossip, they must have taken them into account. Had matters been different, families usually strapped for cash would not have spent appreciable sums of money on the jewellery and elaborate attire gifted to their female members, especially upon marriage.

The colours of garments and shoes

As the dyeing of fabrics and leather was costly and time-consuming, colourful clothing must have been the privilege of the better-off, and especially the Muslims among them. In the mid-sixteenth century, Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1522–91) noted that Ottoman dignitaries regarded black clothes as ill-omened and suitable only for people befallen by some great misfortune.¹⁵ Present-day scholars have confirmed this observation: in Ottoman miniatures, black and the closely related hues of dark purple and navy blue were typical colours of mourning.¹⁶ This state of affairs caused some embarrassment to Busbecq, who encountered strongly voiced

criticism when appearing at the houses of Ottoman grandees dressed in the Spanish style, in other words entirely in black.¹⁷

In Busbecq's time, the sultan's officials seem to have favoured green, which many people associated very closely with Islam. Sultan Süleyman also often wore clothing of this colour, which thus in his time was not a privilege of the Prophet's descendants. Among other colours well liked by Ottoman elite men, Busbecq mentioned white, orange, grey and – intriguingly – dark blue and violet, despite their associations with mourning. Given its reddish component, in times of war people tended to regard purple, in spite of its popularity, as an omen of bloodshed. Perhaps reminiscences of the royal character ascribed to this colour in earlier times, and the sheer expense of obtaining it from murex and cochineal, contributed to the continuing prestige of purple textiles.

Remarkably, Busbecq's list does not contain the colour red, which, however, was a favourite of eighteenth-century Ottoman customers who were reasonably well-off but not super-rich.¹⁸ French traders, who by that time were providing much of the woollen cloth purchased by such men, listed violet and brown among the colours that sold well, remarking that 'the common people' preferred dark hues. However, these commoners must have been men of modest property, as the really poor could not have afforded imported fabrics. Wealthy people preferred finer qualities, with red and purple much in demand. Green also sold well, but not grass-green, presumably because of its religious connotations. According to these French merchants, Iranian customers generally preferred subtler shades, including pink and greyish-green. English traders operating out of Aleppo in the 1700s made similar observations, noting that the colour red sold well in Syria and pastel tones were popular in Iran.

Two inventories of Damascus textile merchants active in the late 1600s confirm the popularity of reddish hues: in their shops; 'bright red' (*kawāzī*) by far outstripped all competitors.¹⁹ Together with another shade of the same colour (*ahmar*), the share of red fabrics was almost one half of all textiles whose colours are on record. Remarkably, blue was completely absent from this list; unfortunately, the records documenting the wares of many Damascene textile traders lacked any references to colour. We do not know whether these people really dealt in undyed materials, or whether the scribes had not bothered to specify. But, even so, it would have made sense for an eighteenth-century importer of woollens to stock up on red fabrics; and perhaps his counterpart in the mid-1500s would have done better if he proposed green and purple hues.

In regulations promulgated by Ottoman sultans, clothing and shoes often were 'colour-coded'; but which religious group might wear what colours varied by time and place. In general, white turbans were the

preserve of Muslims and green ones, the prerogative of the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, the only birth-based 'aristocracy' officially recognized in the Ottoman realm.²⁰ The colour green was so strongly connected to Islam that in the seventeenth century, the author of a pilgrimage handbook for Jews from central Europe intending to visit Jerusalem warned his readers that they had best avoid bringing any green textiles with them.²¹ On the other hand, dark colours and especially black were regarded as suitable for unbelievers; thus, in the early 1800s, in some Balkan towns non-Muslim shoemakers could only manufacture black shoes; and it took a while before the new rules that abolished these limitations, promulgated as part of the Tanzimat reforms after 1839, made any headway 'on the ground'.²²

Woollens, cottons, and silks

Well-to-do Ottoman customers often bought their woollens from Venetian and, later, from English and French importers.²³ For people with less money, there was the rough woollen fabric known as *aba*, which artisans from the Filibe/Plovdiv area had begun to market on an interregional basis during the seventeenth century, and developed into a major commodity in the 1700s. As their given names indicate, in Istanbul by the early to mid-eighteenth century, the tradesmen retailing this fabric were quite often Orthodox Christians from south-eastern Europe; they may have had familial connections to the producers, or at least originated from the region of manufacture.²⁴ Quite often, these traders sold their goods outside Istanbul's major business district, located between the covered markets and the Golden Horn, perhaps because poorer customers shunned the – for them – intimidating places where 'rich textiles' were on offer.

Woollens served mainly for outer garments, and especially for winter wear. Other clothes were often of cotton; and especially in Istanbul, there was a wide selection available. After all, provincial manufacturers eagerly tapped into the empire's largest consumer market. Among popular goods, we find lining fabrics such as *bogasi*, often but not necessarily undyed. In the sixteenth century, a specialized cotton market existed in a village not far from Silifke, on the southern coast of Anatolia. While this market catered for interregional traders, presumably most of the fabrics sold here were simple and rustic.²⁵ In the fifteenth but also in the eighteenth century, cottons from northern Anatolia found customers in the lands to the north of the Black Sea.²⁶

Once again, we know more about the higher qualities; for luxury cottons also existed: in the 1600s we hear of cotton fabrics from Buldan,

Manisa and Denizli being dyed in Tire, inland from Izmir. Given the limitations of river transport and the state of the roads in western Anatolia, this type of transportation would have only made sense for high-priced items.²⁷ Intriguingly, the manufacture of gold-embroidered cottons in Denizli had a very long history. Ibn Battūta, a North African traveller who visited the town in the fourteenth century, noted that the numerous Greek women living there produced a cotton textile named for the place of manufacture, either Denizli/Tonguzlu or else Ladik, as both names were in use at that time. The cottons Ibn Battūta referred to sported designs in gold thread and had a reputation for durability, given the high quality of both the embroidery thread and the cotton.²⁸ Although by the 1960s and 1970s, there were no more Greeks living in the area, a type of cotton, often with a chequered design, was still being machine-embroidered with yellow yarn, for use as bedspreads and tablecloths. Today, however, this textile seems to have disappeared.

In the Ottoman world, people with money to spend often preferred Indian fabrics, which normally arrived by way of Egypt, where the importing of cottons from India had been vibrant already in Mamlūk times (see the Introduction).²⁹ Often printed and sometimes painted Indian cottons enchanted Ottoman – and modern – viewers with their fast colours and delicate designs. By the seventeenth century, importing Indian textiles had become a mainstay of the Cairo business world; and a host of Indian textile terms entered Ottoman Turkish as loanwords.³⁰ But by the early 1700s already, the historian Naima worried about the loss of silver as a result of this trade, as Indian merchants found few goods to buy and therefore demanded payment in coin.³¹ Around 1800, Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807) echoed the same sentiments, trying to make his grandees ‘buy Ottoman’; yet it is hard to tell to what extent the ruler’s admonitions were effective.³² Probably, the collapse of the Ottoman market during the wars of the late 1700s and early 1800s and the – albeit temporary – destruction of Indian cotton weaving under British colonial government limited the importation of textiles from this source much more than any official commands.

Manufacturers of what is today northern Syria and south-eastern Turkey in the 1700s produced imitations of Indian cottons that, upon occasion, they managed to export: for the surviving examples have been located in Marseilles.³³ Apparently this craft did quite well during the mid 1700s, but suffered a great deal from the economic downturn caused by the Russian–Ottoman war of 1768–74.

Much more information is available on Ottoman silks; and, once again, it is the most luxurious ‘palace’ qualities that have left the longest paper trail.³⁴ From the sixteenth century onward, Ottoman Palace fashions

departed from their Timurid models, previously viewed as the acme of elegance. These new-style silks often featured large designs which incorporated flowers occurring in nature, such as tulips, hyacinths, and carnations. Thus they differed notably from the Timurid models, mostly manufactured in Iran, which featured small designs composed of fairly abstract motifs. These latter silks, also favoured by the Ak Koyunlu, who controlled most of Iran after the mid fifteenth century, were certainly known in the Ottoman Palace.³⁵ But our sources do not indicate whether Sultans Mehmed II, Bayezid II, Selim I, and Süleyman (r. 1451–1566) made a conscious decision to deviate from the Iranian-based model, or whether the change was more or less incremental and unconscious. Ottoman Palace silks apparently came either from Istanbul or from Bursa, although Damascus, part of the empire since 1516, was also a noted silk-weaving centre. In the 1500s, the necessary raw silk arrived from northern Iran by a caravan route traversing northern Anatolia, with taxes payable at public weighing scales en route.

Ottoman silks did not attract a large number of customers in Italy, as opposed to eastern Europe where they enjoyed great esteem, as we will see.³⁶ Yet Ottoman textile merchants were not a rare sight in Venice; and the hair of the Angora goat, and the soft and shiny textiles woven from this material, were particularly successful.³⁷

Domestic textiles

In the Ottoman world, textiles were what made a house inhabitable: a bench (*sedir*) covered with fabrics and cushions served for sitting and the reception of visitors, while curtains provided protection from the sun and ensured increased privacy. Rugs and mats covered the floors of at least the more comfortable homes, and many people owned a small prayer carpet (see Chapter 4).

Most research has been done on carpets of all varieties; and recently Amanda Phillips has studied cushion covers as well.³⁸ As for the ownership of carpets outside the higher levels of the elite and pious foundations, our understanding remains vague. Post-mortem inventories, the only usable source, say very little about colours, dimensions, and – most troublesome to the researcher – about the places of manufacture. Thus we know little about the owners of the famous Uşak carpets; and the seventeenth-century traveller Evliya Çelebi, who has mentioned some remarkable pieces of this kind, records only items in the possession of institutions.³⁹ A detailed study of textiles used in Damascus shortly before 1700 contains very few references to rugs and carpets.⁴⁰ Any specific conclusions are most hazardous; but, if the inhabitants of the Syrian metropolis had owned

numerous knotted rugs and carpets, a larger variety of relevant terms should have been on record. Moreover, the Damascene scribes did not mention any luxury carpets from Cairo, Iran, or even Anatolia.

Places of manufacture

Some rugs and carpets, mainly from Uşak but also from Selendi and Gördüs in western Anatolia, were available in the Istanbul market in 1640.⁴¹ But as we do not have any further price registers as detailed as the single list containing this information, we cannot say whether the items mentioned here had been available in the Ottoman capital during earlier times as well, and whether they continued to appear on the market in the 1700s or early 1800s.

Thanks once again to Evliya Çelebi, who passed through Uşak in 1671–72, we do know that, in this town, people actually made carpets.⁴² Thus in the later 1600s, ‘Uşak’ was not a mere ‘trade name’, referring to a manufacture which had long migrated elsewhere. This traveller noted the presence of carts that brought in plants for the dyers treating the wool from which the carpets were made. But for a reason that remains obscure, no references to this manufacture have turned up in the rather numerous archival documents mentioning Uşak and dating mostly from the 1700s. Perhaps, by this time, carpet production had in fact moved to other towns such as Gördüs, which seems to have gained prominence during the 1700s.

Furthermore, the French traveller Jean de Thévenot (1633–67), a younger contemporary of Evliya’s, has left a description of a carpet workshop in Cairo, where young boys worked to the dictation of a master. The latter possessed a drawing, from which he read off the number of knots to be made, while between their fingers the boys held lengths of yarn in the colours required.⁴³ We do not know how many such shops were active in Cairo; but the description is intriguing nevertheless, as in this setting several identical carpets could be made according to the dictation of a single master.

Unfortunately Thévenot does not specify the origin of the designs at issue; the master might have produced them, but he could also have received them from an outside source, perhaps from Istanbul. After all, already in the mid 1500s, Venetian merchants exporting carpets from Egypt sponsored the workshops of their choice over considerable periods of time, so as to be sure of obtaining a saleable product.⁴⁴ These Venetian traders made Ottoman carpets available all over Europe: in England not only the court, but also rich London merchants obtained access (see the Introduction). Moreover, at least in Italy, imported carpets were available

even in smaller towns: thus in early sixteenth-century Ferrara, the name of an Egyptian carpet trader has survived in the local archives.⁴⁵

Cushion covers were destined for customers who were not poor, but did not possess the resources needed for the purchase of 'palace quality' silks; due to the widening of the market which this industry permitted, cushion covers probably helped to ensure the survival of the Bursa silk industry, threatened by European competition for Iranian raw silk and the upheavals of the years before and after 1600. Customers from outside the city were interested in these cushion covers too, many such items occurring in the post-mortem inventories of seventeenth-century Edirne.⁴⁶ Moreover, the Ottoman sultans also acquired these pieces, with samples today in the Topkapı Palace Museum.⁴⁷ As the scholar and diplomat Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774–1856) noted, even in the early 1800s cushion covers still featured prominently among Bursa's exports; and the numerous surviving examples also indicate the long-lived prosperity of the industry.⁴⁸

Leatherwork

Leather was in high demand, most obviously for shoes. But shoes have a low survival rate. In the early 1500s, regulations specified who was responsible if footwear disintegrated: if a pair of shoes cost more than 5 *akçe*, for every *akçe* paid the buyer obtained a two-day guarantee. If he had purchased high-quality boots for 30 to 33 *akçe*, the warranty should have extended over two months. If, before that time, holes developed in the leather, responsibility lay with the tanner; if the seams came apart, the shoemaker was responsible and paid a fine.⁴⁹

Presumably most shoes lasted longer than just two months; but perhaps they needed repairs after 60 days or so; in any case, the shortness of the warranty also is consonant with a limited number of surviving shoes.⁵⁰ Most shoes in today's collections merely date to the 1800s.⁵¹ The wooden clogs that people wore in bathhouses also possessed leather uppers; but once again, most of the surviving items are from the 1800s.⁵² Yet there are some exceptions proving the rule: thus the Topkapı Palace Museum contains some impressive and highly decorated shoes and boots; and the museum of Manisa, a town famous for its leather manufacture, holds another such item.⁵³ Outside Turkey, the National Museum in Warsaw has preserved a few luxury boots from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁵⁴ By the end of our period, in the early 1800s, a host of different shoes were available to the Istanbul consumer; but once again, we often do not know what types of shoes the terms mentioned in our documents really stand for.

Leather also served as the basic semi-finished material for elaborate horse-gear that wealthy owners might decorate with metals and semi-precious stones. Apparently, few if any examples of this artwork survive in Istanbul: a fire in the stables of the Topkapı Palace destroyed most of the latter's holdings from before 1800. Thus apart from the rather numerous depictions in courtly manuscripts, we only can turn to collections outside of Turkey, particularly the Kremlin Museum in Moscow.⁵⁵ Traders who wished to buy valuable furs on behalf of the Ottoman court needed the permission of the Tsar; and seemingly because ornamented leatherwork was a favourite of the Russian elite, it frequently was part of the 'gift packages' arriving in the capital of the tsars during the 1500s and 1600s. In addition to saddles and bridles, spectacular, highly decorated flasks also might be made of leather (see Chapter 5).

Embroidering leather with silk and sometimes silver thread was a common way of enhancing the 'luxury effect'. Certain portfolios of embroidered leather had served as the 'envelopes' of letters sent by Ottoman dignitaries to their interlocutors at foreign courts. Others apparently were made to order for wealthy visitors to Istanbul, quite a few such portfolios surviving in European museums to the present day.⁵⁶

But in the end, most leather served more mundane ends. In the 1500s, certain types could not be exported, presumably because the Ottoman administration wished to ensure a sufficient supply for its soldiers, but also because leather was a strategic resource that potential enemies should not be able to acquire.⁵⁷ In the course of the 1600s and 1700s, however, this prohibition lost much of its force: for in the eighteenth century, the correspondence of a merchant family from Thessaly indicated that in certain towns of today's Bulgaria, local tanners were very anxious to sell to traders about to cross the Habsburg border. When sales were lower than expected, these artisans might forcibly detain the merchants until the latter consented to buy.⁵⁸ It is hard to imagine that such 'crowd action', which must have been quite noisy, could have taken place if the export of leathers had still been illegal. Admittedly the changes in Ottoman export policies during this period are still an underresearched subject.

(PLATE 30) A TURBAN AND ITS SUPPORT

Documenting headgear

Similarly to clothing traders anxious to make a sale, we must now unpack the goods that we intend to present. Three kinds of sources record the appearance of turbans: first of all there are some surviving pieces, such as the one shown here, which once again comes from the Ambras collection of

Archduke Ferdinand and must date to the second half of the sixteenth century. The textile section of the Topkapı Palace Museum contains many more such items.⁵⁹ Some of the latter once belonged to the decor of the mausoleums of sultans, princes, and holy men, as it was customary to place the headgear of the deceased on top of his grave. As, however, the turbans deteriorated with time, the guardians of the tombs often replaced them; and on the graves of members of the Ottoman dynasty deceased in the 1500s, we may well find turbans dating only to the eighteenth century.⁶⁰

In addition, we have the many turbans sculpted in stone, which at least since the 1600s, formed the headstones of the graves belonging to most men who in their lifetimes had aspired to social position. The recently discovered graves of two rebellious soldiers from this period – presumably commanders of some kind – show roughly sculpted turbans clearly copied from those worn by men of higher status.⁶¹ In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when more people erected elaborate gravestones for their dead relatives, turbans of different varieties symbolized the offices held by the deceased. Furthermore, after Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) had decreed that all office-holders apart from religious scholars should wear the fez, the latter, which changed shape according to the fashions of the later 1800s, became the principal headgear to be found on gravestones.

Last, but not least, we have Ottoman miniatures showing courtly scenes in which most of the participants wear the turbans appropriate to their rank. These images are of special value, as some of them go back to the late fifteenth century and become numerous in the sixteenth, while most sculpted turbans date to a far later period. Moreover, these images are in colour, while whatever colours once existing on gravestones have long since vanished.⁶² Of course we cannot be sure that the painters of miniatures adhered closely to the colours they saw in real life, as harmony within the pictorial composition was surely a major consideration. In fact, many turbans were white; however, they might well show decorations in colour, and the caps supporting the fabric also were often dyed red, green, or some other hue.

From the eighteenth century onward, certain members of the Ottoman elite developed a particular liking for the documentation of costume. Thus the miniatures painted by Levni (d. 1732) emphasize the quality of the turbans depicted to such an extent that we may view his work as documenting elite headgear of the early 1700s. About a century later, the Ottoman artist Fenerci Mehmed Efendi, about whose life very little is known, also painted the turbans of the sultan and his highest-ranking servitors in the manner in which they appeared just before the changeover to the fez decreed by Mahmud II.⁶³

Turbans as material and symbolic objects

In the Ottoman world, a turban denoted social status; in general, high dignitaries wore larger turbans than ordinary people. This headgear consisted of two basic components: at the centre, there was a fairly tall and often quilted cap (*kavuk*), which supported the wrapped cloth that was the second – and more apparent – component of this headgear. The cap might be conical, or else possess a flat top. A length of cotton, or occasionally silk cloth, of higher or lower quality according to the means of the wearer, surrounded the *kavuk*. This cloth might be rolled and then arranged around the central cap so as to give the whole headdress a sculptural appearance.⁶⁴ Courtly figures might add decorations; and a skull cap was worn underneath. Wrapping a turban took time and presumably, once in place, it limited the wearer's freedom of movement. Therefore when at home, the latter might take it off; in an informal setting, his skull cap would suffice. If not in use, the turban was protected by wrapping it in a square piece of cloth, which might feature elaborate embroidery. The Topkapı Palace Museum contains several such items.⁶⁵

The shape and colour of the cap around which the turban had been wrapped might indicate the wearer's religious and/or political allegiance. Thus sixteenth-century Ottoman miniatures show both Ottomans and Safavids wearing their caps rather high; in some miniatures, it is therefore not easy to distinguish the two sides. But in principle Safavid adherents wore a pointed red cap that dramatically 'stuck out' of their turbans. This headgear had symbolic value attached to it, as the 12 folds in the cap stood for the 12 Imams, descendants of the Prophet Muhammad and, according to the Shi'ite faith, the chosen guardians of Islam.⁶⁶ Descendants of the Prophet (*seyyid*, *şerif*) appear on some miniatures with a green cap visible under the cloth of their turbans.⁶⁷ In the album of Fenerci Mehmed Efendi, the head of this community is even clothed entirely in green, including both the *kavuk* and the cloth surrounding it.⁶⁸ This headgear enjoyed great respect, so that if a descendant of the Prophet was to suffer physical punishment, it was customary to remove his headgear first.⁶⁹

However, at least for an outsider to the arcane art of turban-wrapping, it is impossible to say which personage(s) may have worn the turban that the Archduke Ferdinand acquired for his collection. The *kavuk* is rather high, which corresponds to sixteenth-century fashion. On the photograph, we see seven folds; and this may mean that the cap really features 12; if so, the turban may well be of Iranian origin. Or else it belonged to an Anatolian adherent of the Bektāşi order, which in the late 1500s had absorbed a number of heterodox dervishes, to the point of gaining a dubious reputation among the sultans' officials.⁷⁰

(PLATE 31) THE DRESS OF AN OTTOMAN LADY FROM THE 1700S

Outdoor garments

Outdoor garb, supposed to make its female wearer all but invisible, in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century was more diverse than one might expect, the fulminations of contemporary sultans notwithstanding.⁷¹ Once again, Levni has provided the image of a young woman – albeit perhaps not a fully respectable one – wearing veils of thin fabric, perhaps of silk or fine cotton (see Chapter 3).⁷² Even more remarkably, Fenerci Mehmed has provided an illustration of a palace slave wearing outdoor clothing of the sort that had been attracting adverse commentary for decades; as the young woman depicted is supposedly a palace slave, the viewer may well ask whether the sultans could enforce their regulations even in their own household.⁷³ Or else the artist may have provided a glimpse of ‘forbidden charms’, showing what men would have liked to see but were no longer able to. Be that as it may, the young woman wears a translucent veil over her headdress and a second one over the lower part of her face, leaving only the eyes open but allowing the viewer to guess the shape of her face and neck and also glimpse her jewellery. Her body certainly is concealed by the wide coat known as *ferace*; but the latter features a very long collar, of the type on which contemporary sultanic edicts heaped vituperation.⁷⁴ Of course many women for financial or social reasons could not emulate this type of dress – and some of them must have viewed young *élégantes* of the type depicted by Levni and Fenerci Mehmed with extreme disapproval.

Indoor wear

While the headdress was gender- and rank-specific, the basic features of Ottoman dress covering the remainder of the body were similar for men and women. Both genders wore trousers (*şalvar*), the width of the fabric being gathered both around the waist and near the ankle. Given the limited effectiveness of braziers and open fireplaces, even the inhabitants of wealthy homes, when indoors, frequently wore fur-lined jackets, called *hırka* and *cepken*, the latter waist-length with long sleeves.⁷⁵ As noted, the basic elements apparently remained more or less stable between the late 1400s and the nineteenth century. But, at least after about 1700, the details varied according to fashion, making it possible to establish the approximate date of manufacture. While the oldest pieces of non-royal clothing extant today for the most part date only to the late eighteenth century, illustrations from earlier decades document fashion change in the course of the 1700s.

Close to the body, people wore a shirt or chemise (*gömlek*), either of cotton or of silk. Quite often this garment reached to the ankles. The chemise was the basis of any outfit, as obvious from a fifteenth-century story in which Adam is a weaver who provided a *gömlek* and a veil for Eve. In the same vein, a person declaring that he was tired of life claimed that he would throw away his *gömlek*, as he now required only his shroud.⁷⁶ Often the wide sleeves of the shirt billowed out of whatever garment the owner wore over it. It might also be apparent under the robe (*entari*), especially if the latter had a décolleté bodice, as was fashionable in the early eighteenth century. According to a painting by the contemporary miniaturist Levni, some chemises were partly open as well, so that a section of the breast was visible.⁷⁷ By contrast, the images of palace ladies given to us by Fenerci Mehmed and dating to 1811 show *gömleks* of fine translucent fabric gathered tightly around the neck and held in place by an elaborate necklace.⁷⁸ At this time, it was also fashionable for women to wind long stole-like pieces of matching fabric around the wrists, which hung down to about ankle length and remained visible even when the wearer was otherwise covered up for moving around in public.⁷⁹

As for the *entari* worn over the chemise, it was the most eye-catching of all indoor clothes. *Entaris* often reached only slightly over the knee. Their skirts might be widened by gores so that they could be voluminous at the lower hem; yet the thickness of the textile would not make the wearer appear heavy and clumsy. Eighteenth-century *entaris* were normally open at the front, and only closed at breast and waist level with small buttons and button loops. A belt, which in the case of wealthy people was of silver or else of silk fabric closed by a silver clasp, emphasized the curves of the body but not the waistline properly speaking: for the depictions both by Ottoman and European artists always show the belt sitting on the hips. Lady Mary Montagu claimed that among high-born Ottoman ladies, it was fashionable to be pregnant, if only to prove that one was not too old to conceive.⁸⁰ On the other hand, an Ottoman dress of the 1700s preserved in Poland does possess a marked – albeit low – waistline.⁸¹ Some women also wore a simple shawl in place of a belt.⁸²

In the 1700s, sleeves were often loose-fitting, the ends shaped in an asymmetrical fashion, so as to show the lining. At least one surviving *entari* from the eighteenth century has very long, heavily embroidered, sleeves, reminiscent of the fifteenth-century Ottoman-inspired clothes worn by noblewomen such as Maria of Mangop (d. 1477).⁸³ For the funerary robe of this Moldavian lady also featured very long sleeves: only by passing her arms through special slits could the wearer have extricated them. In the eighteenth century, it was customary to emphasize seams and edges by fairly broad braid with a high metal content. Known as *gaytan*, more

modest versions also decorated 'ready-to-wear' caftans; the braid was often imported from the empire's Bulgarian provinces.⁸⁴

The *entari* shown here, which has been studied by Lâle Görünür, is of a fine silk fabric known as *sevai*; while today it is light grey, the original colour was blue.⁸⁵ Under the fabric is a thin layer of cotton wadding, which must have helped to keep the wearer warm, and also increased the stability of the fabric. Small bunches of flowers in regular rows are the principal ornament; and gilt silver braid enhances the richness of the dress, while the low décolletage and elegantly shaped sleeves date the *entari* to the late eighteenth century.

(PLATE 32) CAFTANS, OCCASIONALLY OF LEATHER

On top of the *entari* and *şalvar* both men and women might wear caftans, as a protection from the cold, but also as a valued decorative item. When, after the death of a sultan, palace officials selected items of clothing to be preserved in his memory, a caftan was the preferred choice; therefore pieces belonging to sultans have survived in significant numbers. Admittedly, recent research has shown that the labels attached by palace bureaucrats are not always correct.⁸⁶

Royal caftans have been shown in numerous exhibitions. The caftans of princes are also reasonably well known; but those of princesses are much rarer, as palace officials did not often preserve them.⁸⁷ Even fewer caftans in today's collections belonged to people not part of the sultans' families.⁸⁸ As for the poor, presumably many did not even own this relatively prestigious garment. According to the means of the wearer, a caftan might be of silk or some other reasonably strong fabric, perhaps wool; and many caftans had a lining, usually of the simple cotton known as *bogasi*.

Caftans and ceremonies

Some caftans sported standing collars; but many were collarless and open at the front, or if the wearer wanted to close his/her garment, he/she could add frogging and small braided buttons.⁸⁹ Sleeve lengths varied: long-sleeved, short-sleeved, and sleeveless items existed, and some caftans came with detachable sleeves which the wearer might employ if he/she wished to wear the garment on a solemn occasion.⁹⁰ Nakkaş Osman's sixteenth-century illustrations of the *Hünernâme* also show dignitaries attending the enthronement of a sultan wearing caftans with very long sleeves, hanging down by their sides.⁹¹ However, the sleeves of these personages seemingly reached only to their knees and thus could be thrown over the shoulder onto the back; they must have been less cumbersome than those

extravagantly long items lying by the sides of the deceased Moldavian noblewoman Maria.

Young princes and princesses also had caftans made for them; some of the items in the Topkapı Palace collection must have been worn by children two or three years of age.⁹² However, at least the caftans made out of brocaded fabrics show no signs of ever having been washed; thus, we may assume that these valuable garments were only worn on special occasions. Or perhaps some of them had even been especially ordered for placement on a coffin, when the prince or princess had died in infancy.⁹³

Apart from being a material object, caftans had a ceremonial character denoting rank and function. At the Ottoman court, it was common practice to present foreign ambassadors with robes of honour resembling caftans, which they wore over their own clothes when the sultan received them at the beginning and end of their missions. Ottoman ambassadors also wore caftans when on official duty. However, variations were perhaps possible: thus an Ottoman dignitary, whose waist-length portrait in watercolour and of Indian workmanship was presented to the Mughal Emperor Jahāngīr in 1610, features a reddish garment that may have been an *entari*.⁹⁴ On top, this Ottoman gentleman wore a garment made of a soft fabric and bordered around the neck with a broad band of what was probably gold embroidery on a wine-coloured ground: this design differs somewhat from that of an Ottoman caftan. However, we do not know whether the dignitary depicted was an actual ambassador or a lower-level member of the embassy – and furthermore we cannot be sure that he was in fact wearing Ottoman clothes. In fact, the artist has added a bit of fantasy: if we look very closely, the top of the headgear features the face of a tiny *putto* sketched in gold, which cannot have been present in reality. Perhaps this bit of whimsy was a joke whose meaning now escapes us. Another miniature from the Mughal court, dated to the period of Shah Jahān (r. 1628–58), does, however, show an Ottoman ambassador in his official fur-lined red robes, albeit depicted with some poetic licence.⁹⁵

Caftans made of leather

Leather caftans might be part of a uniform, such as that worn by the water carriers of the sultans' palace. A garment of this kind, dating to the eighteenth century, has a broad band for a collar; and along the body there descends a piece of leather widening towards the lower hem.⁹⁶ But unless the single published photograph is misleading, this piece, heavily ornamented with what seems to be appliqué work, is of relatively hard and coarse leather.

However, garments for people of higher rank also could be made out of leather, as apparent from a caftan preserved in the museum of the Veste Coburg in northern Bavaria. Supposedly, it was taken as booty by Prince Friedrich Josias von Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld (1737–1815) (see also Chapter 1).⁹⁷ A very similar coat is in the Hungarian National Museum and has been studied in detail by Ibolya Gerelyes. She has debunked a long-lived legend that the coat was taken as booty by a Hungarian nobleman in 1526.⁹⁸

Apparently the piece shown here has been in Coburg ever since the late eighteenth century; but the museum curators think that it may be much older, having perhaps been manufactured between 1650 and 1700. If so, it may have been an heirloom that an Ottoman officer had taken along on campaign without using it much; for the delicate ornamentation, which the curators believe may have come from a workshop associated with the sultans' court, could not have survived decades of rough wear and tear.

The Coburg caftan, of dark-coloured leather, must have been relatively short, perhaps reaching to slightly below the knees; this '*trois-quarts*' length would have been more comfortable when riding. As a decoration, it features a wide band of brown leather which reaches from the neckline to the bottom, forming an edging to the coat. The principal ornament is an abstract cut-out design, rendered more visible by an underlying whitish material. In addition, the front section of the coat shows further cut-out motifs in light brown leather. The ends of the sleeves have been cut to an asymmetrical shape, of the kind also seen in *entaris*.

Dating this piece is so problematic because the number of surviving leather caftans is limited.⁹⁹ In its overall appearance, the item studied by Gerelyes resembles the piece preserved in Coburg, but differs from the latter by its short, flaring sleeves and the appliqué designs which form the decoration; for the band descending to the edge of the caftan, and also the body of the garment, feature floral ornaments rather than the abstract designs characteristic of the Coburg piece. Furthermore, the garment preserved in Hungary has a fairly wide collar, which the wearer may have raised to protect his neck, rather like the coat of the palace water carriers preserved in the Topkapı Palace Museum.

In addition, the sultans' palace contains four coats made of shagreen leather.¹⁰⁰ One is a very rare item, which curators have identified as dating to the time of Süleyman the Magnificent; it had badly deteriorated, but has now been carefully restored. To my knowledge, this item is not on show and has not been published; but the description available indicates that it too possesses a fine, lace-like border, perhaps resembling the work on the Coburg caftan. In the same museum, there are also three caftans of shagreen leather lined with fur, two of which were the property of Sultan Murad IV

(r. 1623–40), while the third supposedly had belonged to Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–95). But Hülya Tezcan, to whom we owe the reference and brief descriptions of these four pieces, believes that the document assigning this coat to Murad III is in error, and it also belonged to Murad IV.

Furthermore a photograph of a leather caftan from the Topkapı Palace Museum with what seem to be appliqué ornaments has recently been published.¹⁰¹ Apparently the sheepskin from which it has been made retains its original rather curly wool, which is visible in the caftan's narrow collar; the closure is unusual, as several strings ornamented with tassels have been fastened to the body of the caftan, which the wearer could tie together. Unfortunately, the caption does not tell us anything about the date of manufacture. In this, as in other matters, we still have a great deal to learn.

(PLATE 33) A PAIR OF SHOES

The many wars and migrations which the inhabitants of Anatolia and the Balkans experienced throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been inimical to the preservation of all material culture; and footwear is no exception. If not consciously preserved, leather only survives in very dry locations, such as Egypt, in caves where natural gases inhibit decay, or in swamps or riverbeds where a layer of clay has protected the items that have ended up there. As yet, not many excavations have provided us with samples of Ottoman-style shoes.

Therefore much of our knowledge concerning footwear older than the 1800s comes from written sources. A set of regulations, to be applied by the market inspector (*muhtesib*) and concerning Istanbul at the beginning of the sixteenth century, enumerates the different colours that tanners could produce. The range obtainable in leather, and thus – in principle at least – in shoes as well, includes lemon yellow, orange, bright red like a pomegranate blossom – presumably red veering towards orange – red without any qualifications and a blue-tinged red evoking the colour of the Judas-flower (*cercis siliquastrum*; in Turkish *erguvan*).¹⁰² We also find the term *bulgari*, which in the nineteenth century denoted Russia leather, but which around 1500 may well have signified an unidentified kind of colour.

A similar text concerning Bursa also enumerated different types of shoes for males, which came in large, medium and small sizes, the latter somewhat larger than women's shoes. Seemingly, the compilers had envisaged only a single type of shoe for females.¹⁰³ As for the price of children's shoes, it must have been negotiable, as the regulations did not say anything about them. Unfortunately the surviving texts do not tell us whether these prices applied only to shoes kept in the shop ready for

sale, or also to bespoke items. Quite a few shoes in today's museums are luxury items, with designs embossed or perhaps sewn onto them; as such decorations involved a good deal of extra work; presumably the shoemakers had manufactured them to order for a specific customer, perhaps against a surcharge.

As for the footwear discussed here, it has the distinction of being datable to the later sixteenth century; for these shoes too once formed part of the 'exotica' collection of the Archduke Ferdinand II; after his death in 1596, a group of scribes compiled a catalogue whose descriptions are detailed enough to allow the identification of individual objects. Among the items presently on show in Ambras, we find a pair of shoes made of leather covered in silk. We do not know where and how they were acquired; but at least their presence in the collection ever since the late 1500s is not in doubt.

(PLATE 34) AN OTTOMAN TEXTILE FOR ECCLESIASTICAL USE

Heavy, elaborately decorated silks, in the Ottoman lands as elsewhere, were luxuries mainly reserved for the sultans' court. Certainly, most of these monarchs must have believed that the Islamic rule forbidding silk to males – at least if it touched the body – did not apply to them, or to the higher dignitaries of their courts.¹⁰⁴ But they did take the injunction against depicting humans or animals quite seriously. Thus Ottoman courtly silks typically featured a lattice framing medallions in which flowers might nest. Abstract designs of great sophistication were also popular, or else certain fabrics were decorated with huge, stylized tulips or carnations.¹⁰⁵ As noted, these fashions distinguished Ottoman courtly textiles from those which the various Mongol courts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had favoured, namely small, frequently abstract designs involving a lavish use of gold thread (*panni tatarici*).¹⁰⁶ They also differed profoundly from Safavid court textiles, which, until the 1670s, often had decorations showing not merely people and animals, but figures telling an actual story, perhaps from the famed *Book of Kings*, an emblem of royalty from India to Istanbul.¹⁰⁷

However, a few Ottoman silks also served non-Muslim liturgical purposes. Because these costly fabrics seem to have appeared often in the Catholic churches of Poland, patrons of religious pictures, and the artists working for them, regarded such textiles as suitable clothing for holy figures. Thus already in the 1400s, several depictions of the Virgin Mary show her wearing a robe ornamented with *çintamani* (see Chapter 6), a design of three balls or crescents composing a triangle or pyramid, which had originated in East or South Asia, but become very popular among

Ottoman patrons of silk fabrics. In addition, Polish noblemen quite frequently had Ottoman cushion covers in voided velvet cut up and resewn into church vestments.¹⁰⁸

In yet other cases, a patron might place an order in Istanbul or perhaps Bursa, specifying that the silks he wanted to purchase should feature crosses. As this decoration made the textiles in question unsuitable for secular use, they must have been ordered with the specific intention of donating them to a church or monastery.¹⁰⁹ Thus in the eyes of Polish patrons, the non-Christian origin of these silks did not disqualify them for church use; on the contrary. Similarly in mediaeval and Renaissance Italy, textiles visibly of Islamic manufacture had been part of the apparel of the most saintly figures of Christianity.¹¹⁰ However, Polish patrons often had copes and other vestments made of Ottoman silks ornamented with embroideries in the Baroque style typical of Counter-Reformation Italy; as a source of inspiration, designers sometimes used Italian textiles available in Cracow, at that time the capital of Poland.¹¹¹ We are left to wonder whether the donors felt that Ottoman textiles needed to be 'Christianized', before they became suitable for use in religious services.

Orthodox churchmen also made use of Ottoman textiles: at times a caftan that had probably served as the ceremonial wear of some court dignitary might be 'recycled' for ecclesiastical use. For a churchman with the necessary means, it would not have been too difficult to purchase a caftan and commission the necessary embroideries, as specialists capable of producing decorations in a style close to that current in the late Byzantine period were active in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Istanbul as well.

Thus embroidered covers, depicting the entombment of Christ and used during Easter services, bear the dates of manufacture and the names of the women who probably were responsible for the embroideries: one of them, named Despineta, apparently was active during the late 1600s and early 1700s.¹¹² One of the covers featuring the name of this woman had once belonged to the church of St George in Ankara, some 450 km distant from Istanbul. If the references to Despineta – her family name is unknown – all concerned the same person, we may conclude that she was well enough known to attract pious and wealthy patrons from outside Istanbul. But until more sources turn up, we can only ask the reader to 'assume these assumptions'.

However, Orthodox dignitaries also ordered silks with designs already woven into the fabric, similar to the crosses desired by the Polish patron previously mentioned, but much more elaborate. A favoured motif was the Virgin Mary with the Christ Child: but we also find Christ enthroned, accompanied by the steer of St Luke, the man of St Matthew, and the lion

of St Mark.¹¹³ This fabric had been woven in Istanbul during the late 1500s, apparently by master artisans trained in the court workshops. It served for a church vestment (*sakkos*) worn by the head of the Russian Orthodox Church under Ivan the Terrible (1530–84); and a strip of fabric, probably left over but preserved due to its high value, served in the mid 1600s as the front of a *sakkos* belonging to Patriarch Iosif.

There is no 'secular' ornamentation either in the strip of fabric showing the enthroned Christ or in the textile – also of Ottoman workmanship – of which the body of the vestment had been fashioned. But other items of ecclesiastical apparel used by Orthodox churchmen were quite different. The present-day viewer may be surprised to see that the *sakkos* of Metropolitan Dionysius, donated to the Cathedral of the Dormition in Moscow, features gold satin and bright colours. Yet it had been dedicated in memory of the death of the son of Ivan the Terrible – who may have been killed by his own father.¹¹⁴ In this textile, the carnations, tulips, and other flowers popular in Ottoman textiles surround the repeating design featuring the figures of Mary and Jesus in the format of the Nikopoia or 'bringer of victory'; the floral decor imparts a light and festive air.¹¹⁵ The Virgin Mary wears a blue dress and red veil, while the golden garment worn by the infant Jesus appears as the counterpart to her golden halo. The angels Michael and Gabriel, which hover over mother and son, are also dressed in red, their position in harmony with the great tulips that form part of the bunches of flowers separating the religious motifs from one another. Due to the careful records compiled by the officials serving the tsars, and the relatively good state of preservation of the Kremlin treasures, Moscow is now the prime site for textile historians eager to follow the development of ecclesiastical textiles of Ottoman workmanship.¹¹⁶

Interestingly, a variant of this design is in the Museum für Angewandte Kunst (MAK) in Vienna: unfortunately the fabric has much faded, so that the faces of the personages depicted are unrecognizable. Instead of the flowering bush with a small cross in it that we see in the Moscow version, here the cross dominates the picture and the surrounding vegetal design has been reduced to a wreath of leaves. However, the remaining flowers are identifiable as honeysuckle and tulips, more particularly the variety with slender pointed petals that was a favourite of the Istanbul flower-loving public.¹¹⁷ Given these similarities, prospective patrons may have obtained samples of pre-existing church textiles, of which they then ordered reproductions or variations.

In spite of the work done to date, many unanswered questions remain. Thus we do not know where the workshops producing these textiles were located; while Christian weavers are known to have operated in Bursa, the

silk fabrics of this city and Istanbul cannot be distinguished in terms of design: the manufactures could thus have been located in either city. Furthermore, the only names connected with the Moscow textiles are those of the merchants and envoys that delivered them: the actual manufacturers remain unknown. Designs could have been outlined at the Russian court, at least in general terms, but Ottoman Orthodox dignitaries might just as well have taken the initiative in choosing patterns which they thought would appeal to the Tsar and his courtiers. At least the care with which these pieces were preserved indicates that the donors had made the right choices.

(PLATE 35) A CARPET IN THE LOTTO STYLE

As noted (see the Introduction), art historians interested in carpets have often focused on the reproductions of these textiles in Western imagery. A carpet, featuring a small-scale design often in red and white, somewhat reminiscent of kilims, has been connected with the name of Lorenzo Lotto (1480–1556/57), in whose paintings it occurs. Remarkably, however, many of Lotto's paintings feature carpets of a different variety, confusingly known by the name of the Venetian painter Bellini and featuring a niche design with a second element rather resembling a keyhole placed at the lower edge; this variety has sometimes been called *re-entrant*.¹¹⁸ The borders of the carpets sometimes feature a decoration clearly derived from Arabic calligraphy.

Lotto's best-known depiction of a 'Lotto' carpet is in the Venetian church of SS Giovanni e Paolo, on which the bishop St Antoninus of Florence has his helpers distribute alms to the poor: on the balustrade separating the ecclesiastical dignitaries from the men and women in the street, we find a carpet of the Lotto variety.¹¹⁹ On festive days, it was common in northern and central Italy to display carpets from windows and balconies; and presumably this was the use that Lotto and/or his patrons wished to make of the textile shown together with St Antoninus. Inhabitants of Ottoman Istanbul also sometimes put out colourful textiles for celebrations: thus a miniature showing the festivities following the Ottoman victory of Mezökeresztes/Haçova (1596) featured such fabrics lining the path of the incoming troops; but these pieces were more likely silks.¹²⁰

As for the routes by which Ottoman carpets reached Venice, we know that by the late 1500s, merchants could buy rugs and carpets at the annual fair of Maşkolur in what is now central Greece: a register of market dues tells us that traders paid for cartloads, camelloads and horseloads of items arriving from Anatolia.¹²¹ Unfortunately, the officials compiling this list

did not record the exact places of origin. Thus, once again, the attempts by modern historians to assign surviving carpets to this or that locality remain hypothetical at best. Presumably Venetian buyers visited this fair; or else they relied on intermediaries who had done so. To date, we have no further information on the process by which Anatolian carpets became part of Venetian commercial circuits; there is no parallel to the sponsoring of manufacturers documented for Cairo.¹²²

At least for a while, Lotto owned an Anatolian carpet, presumably either of the 'Lotto' or the 'Bellini' type. This item has entered the record because Lotto pawned it, so as to be in a position to make a loan to two of his friends; we do not know whether he ever retrieved it.¹²³ Not many painters could afford to own such carpets. But then Lotto had many commissions, though most of them were in outlying places including Bergamo, on the border between Venice and Milan, and not in the city of Venice proper. Other carpets may have been the property of the sitters; but, much as we would like to, we cannot go beyond speculation.

Similarly, we do not know how the carpet shown here, owned by the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum (Bavarian National Museum) in Munich, has come to be in this city. We may imagine several possibilities. Some items in the museum go back to the collections of the Wittelsbach family, who in the early modern period were dukes of Bavaria and became kings in the course of the Napoleonic 'reordering of Europe'. But the museum also holds a considerable number of items that the kings of Bavaria, although they continued to define themselves as pious Catholics, confiscated from the churches and monasteries which they closed down in the early 1800s. A large part of the confiscated goods were sold, to help defray the large war contributions demanded by Napoleon; but certain items ultimately entered the royal collections and, from there, were transferred to the Bavarian National Museum. Moreover, certain private collectors also sold or donated items; but we do not know whether carpets were ever involved.

Conclusion

While changing more slowly than in contemporary France, the manufacture of Ottoman textiles and leathers was not fixed in an immutable routine which made contravening 'what had always been done' (*olagelene muhalif*) all but impossible. Certainly officialdom, speaking in the name of the current sultan, used references to tradition as a justification for numerous edicts. The latter should have prevented the limits between elites and subjects from becoming too permeable, cut down expenditure on luxuries, enforced the subordination of – especially Muslim – women and supported established artisans.¹²⁴ But at the same

time, we need to remember that numerous merchants passed through the empire, not only Europeans but also Iranians and sometimes even Indians. These people came – and quickly returned after wars had forced them out – because market opportunities existed. In the 1720s, we find Iranian traders doing business in the remote Russian–Ottoman borderlands, where in all likelihood they mainly sold textiles.

It would be marvellous if one day the Golden Horn were to become the object of archaeological excavation, as occurred with the bed of the Seine at the time when the river was deepened to increase fluvial navigation.¹²⁵ Like the mud of the Seine, that of the Golden Horn might yield buttons, coins, broken weapons of all sorts, simple jewellery, fragments from discarded caftans or carpets and, above all, boots and shoes. After all, the work of Hungarian archaeologists on the site of the royal castle of mediaeval and early modern Buda, today part of Budapest, has provided us with rich information on textiles and leather, deposited in a well which, with the passage of time, became a garbage dump. The most famous of these pieces is a wall hanging from the fourteenth century, but in the fullness of time, hopefully Ottoman finds will emerge as well.¹²⁶

Other textiles from the Ottoman period exist in Egypt, where the lack of rain has allowed the survival of textiles from the times of the pharaohs, to say nothing of early Byzantine and Islamic fabrics. The Textile Museum of Cairo displays a large number of these pieces.¹²⁷ As archaeologists and historians have studied items from the excavations of Old Cairo, it has emerged that Indian cottons were arriving in Egypt already in Mamlūk and early Ottoman times, and were not a complete novelty in the 1600s, when references in written sources became more abundant (see the Introduction). Thus Ottoman subjects with the necessary financial means should have been able to acquire decorative Indian cottons from at least the late fifteenth century onward. No samples have survived in Istanbul; but who knows what further exploration will bring?

As matters stand today, however, our knowledge is limited by the fact that most surviving pieces belonged to people who were rich or at least prosperous, and even further by the fact that many pieces displayed today have attracted the attention of curators because of their aesthetic – and not their historical – interest. Moreover, as Ottoman textiles that ended up in churches and the treasuries of the Russian tsars have been so much better preserved than those in other localities, they have deservedly entered the limelight in recent years.¹²⁸ But we must keep in mind that these works are not characteristic of the ‘regular’ production of Ottoman weavers, shoemakers, or embroiderers.

Furthermore, until the nineteenth century, it was not customary for people outside the sultans’ palace to retain clothing that they no longer

wanted to wear (see the Introduction).¹²⁹ Typically, the owners cut up those pieces that still seemed usable and made them into turban covers or children's dresses; and when these smaller textiles were no longer serviceable, they may have become cleaning rags or ended up in the garbage. Perhaps some textiles were also given to servants; thus a liberated slave woman might use clothing that had once belonged to her mistress, to make a curtain or wrapper for use in her new home. It was only in the nineteenth century that well-to-do town dwellers began to preserve the clothes that had been worn on special occasions; this custom explains why bridal and other festive outfits occupy a disproportionate place in present-day textile collections. Last but not least, as has been said before but cannot be repeated too often, the miseries suffered by people during the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire have drastically reduced the number of pieces that families might have guarded as heirlooms. There is not very much that we can do to correct this bias.

Where it is a question of people of modest means, the survival of textiles is even more unlikely than in the homes of the well-to-do. That such pieces are available – and visible – at all is due to the special efforts of private persons such as Esat Uluumay of Bursa, who for about 50 years has collected clothing and jewellery worn by villagers and inhabitants of small towns.¹³⁰ While some items probably go back to earlier times, many of the outfits displayed seem to date to the late 1800s and early 1900s; a systematic examination should yield interesting results. But once again, most of the textiles and ornaments shown must have belonged to people of some substance. In all likelihood, nobody has ever bothered to collect the clothing worn by the really poor, which can therefore only emerge, if at all, from Egyptian or other excavations.

For the poor, clothes were signs of status only to a very limited extent, and mainly a protection against heat, cold and rain. In the last chapter we will study a number of artefacts reflecting the manner in which members of the elite, and sometimes commoners as well, reacted to the forces of nature, a blessing or a challenge, depending upon circumstances.

CHAPTER 8

EARTH, WATER, AIR AND FIRE: THE GIFTS AND PERILS OF NATURE

All over the world, in the Ottoman lands as elsewhere, humans lived/live in houses built on the earth and ate/eat the fruits of fields and gardens. Yet especially in the Mediterranean world, an earthquake, such as the one hitting Istanbul in 1509, could – and can – destroy in a day or two what has taken centuries to construct.¹ As for water, no living being can subsist for long without drinking and washing. At the same time, an excess of water may destroy fields, meadows and gardens, as happened in Edirne when the rivers near the city flooded in 1688–89.² As for the air, we all breathe it as long as life continues; and sometimes the inhabitants of the Ottoman world – and others – sweetened the air by aromatic wood and other perfumes; yet a movement of the air, put differently a storm, might sink their ships, sending men and goods to the bottom of the sea. Moreover, the germs of quite a few diseases were/are airborne; but given the scarcity of artefacts concerning sicknesses, we will not discuss this issue here. Finally: food cannot be cooked without fire; but cities in general and Istanbul in particular were quite often destroyed by disastrous conflagrations.

In discussing these contradictions, we will follow certain cosmographers and divide the sublunar world into earth, water, air and fire, beginning with what is closest to us, namely the earth. From there, we will make our way towards the more remote spheres.³ As earth, water, air and fire are indispensable for life and yet, under certain conditions, also sources of death and destruction, we will show how the sultan's subjects both benefited and suffered from the elements. Yet our imagery will focus on the bountiful side of nature; flowers, water fountains, perfume sprinklers and the 'captive' fire that heated people's homes. As for the catastrophes, they are known mostly from written sources; and it is difficult to locate material items connected with earthquakes, fires, floods and storms. However, a few

seventeenth-century miniatures show Istanbul conflagrations; and a discussion of one such item will conclude this work.

Almost nothing can be made without the use of earth, water, air and fire. In consequence exchanges between cultures, a major topic of this study, also involve these 'four elements' virtually by definition. Chinese porcelain, made of 'earth' if we use the term in a broad sense, reached the westernmost parts of the Ottoman world, as a few porcelain cups have surfaced in Hungarian excavations (see Chapter 6).⁴ As for the tulip, it had been a favourite in Istanbul and surroundings long before Busbecq and his contemporaries took an interest in this flower and carried it to their central and western European homelands, where some tulip-fanciers ruined themselves to acquire the most admired varieties. Moreover, certain relief depictions of flowering plants decorating the monumental fountains which ornamented eighteenth-century Istanbul quite possibly drew inspiration from the ornamentation of the Taj Mahal in Agra, which Ottoman ambassadors to the Mughal court and members of their suites must have seen.⁵ Thus when filling their pails with water from the fountain in Istanbul's Tophane district, or that sponsored by Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa a short walk to the north, denizens of Istanbul encountered images that may have come from the remote Indo-Pakistani-Bangladeshi subcontinent. In a more mundane mode, it is noteworthy that in Bosnia, in so many ways a showcase of Ottoman culture vis-à-vis the Habsburg arch-enemy, people heated their houses with a type of stove quite different from the open fireplaces and braziers used in Istanbul, although we do not know much about the origins of the Bosnian or Hungarian model.

Thus when we set out to describe the migrations of objects made from – or with the aid of – earth, water, fire and air, possible examples are well-nigh infinite. Any reader will easily come up with items that should have been treated together with – or in place of – the objects introduced here. Limits of space prevent the present author from being more prolix.

Flowers that appear upon the earth

As it is necessary to make a choice and this book *nolens volens* gives luxuries pride of place, our discussion of the earth's bounties will begin with blossoming plants cultivated in gardens. In the late 1500s, the Ottoman Palace ordered large numbers of hyacinths from the Aleppo region, as well as rose bushes from Edirne.⁶ However, even the rose, which featured in so many poems that reference to it became a timeworn cliché, apparently never became as expensive as some tulips did. Therefore there was no official attempt to control rose prices; but in the early eighteenth century, Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) did emit regulations limiting the prices of

tulips.⁷ In addition, carnations and plum blossoms were often depicted on luxury faience of the 1500s. Peonies (*şakayık*) also appeared; but seemingly people viewed them less as botanical realities than as exotic decorative imports. Depictions were thus more stylized than those of tulips or carnations.⁸

Even if depicted in a more or less naturalistic style, flowers could adorn religious books, including the Qu'ran. Thus there survives a wealth of flower illustrations ornamenting religious and non-religious works alike, although most of the surviving manuscripts seemingly date to the 1700s and 1800s.⁹ Flowers also featured in albums of paintings, either as independent creations, or else as suitable 'fillings' for the versos of pages whose rectos contained the principal image.¹⁰

While individual flowers or bouquets thus did not necessarily relate to the contents of the manuscript which they adorned, certain painters produced compendia of garden flowers, where the relevant plants became a subject of depiction in their own right. Thus a manuscript of poems by Derviş Mustafa b. el-Hac Mehmed, calligraphed and illustrated in 1726–28, contains 30 miniatures of flowers painted with great care, and this set may well have been a complete account of the plants cultivated in the gardens of the contemporary Ottoman elites.¹¹ We may therefore assume that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, some readers were interested in flowers, not only as a decorative item, but also in depictions of botanical specimens.

The earth: a valuable raw material for potters

Apart from producing flowers, earth, in the sense of clay and particularly silica derived from sand and quartz stones, was/is the principal source of pottery and faience. Thus the coarse pots in which peasants prepared their food, as well as the most luxurious faience tiled facades, are products of the earth, either directly or indirectly. After all, glass frit, also an ingredient in İznik pottery, came from broken glass ground fine, once again produced from materials provided by the earth. İznik potters also used lead, made available from underground mines by specialized miners.¹² As for the painters of the long-lived ceramics 'made in Kütahya', for a while they were contemporaneous with their more famous counterparts from İznik, with whom they shared the use of cobalt, another mineral derived from the earth. In the two towns, the use of cobalt blue in the manufacture of blue-and-white faience was similar but not identical: while in İznik, the potters and/or their patrons changed the quality of their cobalt blue over time, in Kütahya manufacturers stuck to the hue which their predecessors had adopted at some time in the past.¹³

Problems connected with the procurement of earth-derived raw materials have entered the record but occasionally; and often we can only guess the difficulties with which producers needed to cope. But at least we know that in the early seventeenth century, the masters of Kütahya were supposed to supply sodium (*bora*) to the manufacturers of İznik, a demand which apparently they did their level best to ignore.¹⁴ Presumably at this time there was a shortage of sodium; on the other hand in 1579, the potters had complained of being forced to buy larger quantities of this mineral than required, perhaps because the administrators of the nearby mine needed an outlet for their product.¹⁵

If the Kütahya manufactures are generally considered less sophisticated than those of İznik, they lasted far longer and spread more widely. Tableware and especially coffee cups went to markets all over the empire (see Chapter 5).¹⁶ In addition, the masters of Kütahya produced items for churches and private Christian devotion; but some of their faience decorations shaped like ostrich eggs and lacking depictions of people or animals, also seem to have wound up in Muslim mausoleums.¹⁷ As for ordinary pottery, excavations of Ottoman fortresses have shown that not only did the soldiers use earthenware bowls and ewers, often of local manufacture, but the heads of their pipes were also of clay. In the 1800s, the so-called Tophane works in Istanbul produced high-quality items for the demanding smoker.¹⁸

Water: a basic necessity and a source of enjoyment

Once again, we have far more information on Istanbul than on any other Ottoman city; in fact not much work has been done on the water supplies of any other town.¹⁹ There are no major rivers near Istanbul; thus water had to arrive from the outside as soon as a large city developed on the peninsula between the Sea of Marmara and the Golden Horn, as occurred in late antiquity and once again in the second half of the fifteenth century. In late Roman days, some of Constantinople's water even came from the region of Vize, and the elaborate system of pipes and aqueducts serving the city was over 250 km long, the longest such structure in the entire ancient world.²⁰

In the middle ages, Constantinople was much smaller and therefore could satisfy its requirements from the many cisterns also constructed in late antiquity. After the Ottoman conquest, Mehmed II (r. 1451–81) sponsored the first attempts to once again bring water into Istanbul from the nearby hills, thus creating a reliable supply indispensable for the new and much larger capital that he doubtless envisioned. Under Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520–66), the chief architect Sinan (c. 1489/90–1588) and

his team of specialists in the construction and mapping of water conduits undertook yet further work. Sinan wished to explore and revive the Roman water supply system, an undertaking that gave rise to considerable hostility among high-level dignitaries, who claimed that the whole project was no more than a chimera. Already in the mid 1500s, we hear an argument that was to resonate through the ages, namely that the city was becoming overcrowded; and the grand vizier Semiz Ali Paşa worried that an improved water supply might attract yet more migrants. The latter even went so far as to imprison one of Sinan's aides, known as Kiriz Nikola.²¹ However, once the chief architect had convinced the sultan of the project's feasibility, he was able to investigate and partially reuse installations from the late Roman period located close to the city, incorporating them into the new system of conduits known as Kırkçeşme. But the 250 km of conduits originating in the Vize district were left derelict and never reemployed.

Under a succession of sultans beginning with Süleyman, the two major systems of Kırkçeşme and Halkalı were constructed piecemeal; these included reservoirs named for the sultans who presumably had ordered their construction, some of which survive. Others are only known from the maps depicting the systems serving the major mosques and the Topkapı Palace.²² Kırkçeşme supplied the lower-lying sections of Istanbul, including the sanctuary of Eyüp and Aya Sofya, both located close to the seashore. As for the Halkalı system, it fed the urban quarters located on Istanbul's many hills, but also the complexes of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror (Fatih) and the Süleymaniye, both situated on hilltops. On the Anatolian side of the Bosphorus, Üsküdar had its own system of conduits, probably built piecemeal from the late 1500s onward. Moreover, the commercial suburb of Galata received its water from a fourth system; known as Taksim, this set of conduits was built between 1730 and 1839; it came to be of special importance because from the early eighteenth century onward, the sultans spent a good deal of time in villas along the Bosphorus that depended on the Taksim system. Probably the latter owed its elaboration at least partly to the monarchs' patronage.

The major conduits converging on the city belonged to the great pious foundations instituted by the sultans and their relatives. When a private person found water in the wooded hills of Thrace, he – or in rare instances she – would have had to connect the newly located water source to the nearest foundation-owned conduit; he/she would also install a measuring device, so that the daily yield of the newly found source would become known to the officials running the pious foundation at issue. The latter received a fee for the use of its conduits, collected not in money, but as a share of the water now being brought

into Istanbul. This regulation increased the amount of water available to major pious foundations; on the other hand, it was the responsibility of the relevant administrators to keep the conduits in working order, not an easy task given the frequency of earthquakes. Once the pious foundation had received its share, the remaining water supply was the property of the person who had brought it into Istanbul. The latter often assigned it to a charity of his/her own, perhaps a neighbourhood fountain. But it was also possible to connect the water to a private dwelling, temporarily or in perpetuity; and sales of water also became quite frequent, at least from the eighteenth century onward.²³

Documents from this period sometimes said that the person who had discovered the water and paid for its transportation held the *tapu* of the water at issue.²⁴ However, this term must have had a meaning somewhat different from that current in the sixteenth or seventeenth century; for in this earlier period, nobody could make *tapu*-land into a pious foundation without the sultan's explicit permission. By the 1700s, however, transferrals of water resources into charities were routine, so that the word *tapu* in these contexts must have referred to a legal status closely akin to private ownership; after all, only freehold property could become part of a pious foundation. In the course of the 1700s, the amount of water in the hands of private persons may well have increased; but we cannot be sure, particularly since, as noted, a good deal of the water originally in private hands soon, in its turn, became the property of one or another pious foundation.

These institutions needed large quantities of water, first of all because no mosque or theological college (*medrese*) could function without it. Of necessity, ablutions preceded prayers; and the patrons of some mosques made the fountains they built into veritable works of art. Furthermore, many pious foundations made money by running public baths (*hamam*) – to say nothing of the fact that these baths were important worksites, as a multitude of poor people, both male and female, made a living by serving *hamam* customers. In the mid eighteenth century, the administration once recorded some 2,500 males working in this sector, plus an uncounted number of women.²⁵ Thus the continuing availability of water was a precondition for the cleanliness of the city's inhabitants, but also provided a significant number of jobs.

Given the absence of a citywide system of water conduits, most people unable to have water piped to their homes – and they were the majority even in the early 1900s – depended on public fountains operating as part of pious foundations. Women and children must have carried innumerable pails of water to their homes, while the millers operating horse-driven mills, in addition to porters and street traders, must have watered their

animals at this same source. Well-to-do householders might pay water carriers to supply their homes; this arrangement was widespread in Cairo, where the Nile was the major source, but carriers in Edirne also transported river water, from the small river known as the Tunca.²⁶

Utility apart, in the eighteenth century, water could also become a site of 'splash and spectacle' and thus a source of enjoyment.²⁷ Once again, this novel appreciation is most obvious in the case of Istanbul and Cairo: the sultans might now enjoy festivities seated on the waterfront, with the showmen operating, rather precariously, on rafts.²⁸ As for the men of Cairo, they might enjoy their coffee on the banks of the Nile.²⁹ Many fountains were now not merely utilitarian, but might be monumental, as big as a small dwelling and highly decorated with inscriptions, inlays of contrasting colours and reliefs of flowering plants.³⁰ Thus the fountain of Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) was noteworthy enough for a provincial qadi, who happened to be in Istanbul in 1729, to note in his diary that he had gone to visit it.³¹

In addition, many new pious foundations now boasted a *sebil*, a tiny pavilion from which a man served drinking water, without payment, to any person wishing for it. In Cairo during the 1700s, the military men controlling the city often sponsored two-storeyed buildings, with a *sebil* on the ground floor and a primary school on the upper story.³² Both in Istanbul and in Cairo, *sebils* were often elaborately decorated; and their abundant ornaments added a playful touch to the urban scene.

Air and wind: minor sources of power on land, but indispensable at sea

After earth and water with their many documented uses, the air is something of a let-down, as it is much more difficult to account for the way in which air impacted Ottoman, and especially Istanbul's, material culture. Windmills existed; but they were not common, except in Alexandria in Egypt and in some locations on the Aegean coast.

Certainly the power of wind drove ships; and sailing was the principal way of using wind power in the Ottoman world. But if the many eighteenth-century depictions of shipping in the Bosphorus and Golden Horn are at all realistic, many smaller craft relied on rowers alone. Due to the difficulty of predicting the direction of the wind at what might be the crucial moments of a battle, Mediterranean navies continued to use galleys long after they had become obsolete in the Atlantic with its more reliable wind patterns. These galleys possessed sails, but largely relied on the physical force of rowers. Only in the second half of the seventeenth century did the Ottoman navy gradually adopt warships relying on sails alone: in 1644, the responsible commanders and officials first adapted for

use in battle some sailing ships originally constructed for carrying supplies. After this date, the Ottoman navy gradually abandoned galleys, presumably to the great relief of the many men who in the recent past had risked their lives as rowers.³³

The struggle to control fire

Obviously Ottoman subjects, just like other people, needed fire every day, for manufacturing, cooking and heating. A great many trades used fire, from blacksmiths, to public baths, to the men and women who ironed clothes. But while this aspect is so obvious as to appear trivial, the dangers involved need closer attention.

Manufacturing ropes was especially risky: for not only was the finished product flammable, the process also left tiny fibres floating in the air that could ignite when even a spark touched them; and increasing the risk, manufacturers might also work in wooden sheds. While rope making should have been located close to the seashore, apparently matters did not always work out that way. We learn about the attendant problems, when the people whose dwellings or workplaces were close to a fire-prone activity complained about the ways in which manufacturers went about their business; we usually do not know whether the official injunctions that often followed produced any positive results.³⁴

Cooking also involved a fire risk; and perhaps for this reason, many people cooked outdoors. The evidence of the French traveller and architect Jean-Nicolas Huyot, who in the early 1800s visited wealthy dwellings in Istanbul, permits a modern historian to deduce that in such places kitchens were originally located at a distance from the main building.³⁵ But in the long run, special cooking areas did become part of more elaborate urban dwellings.

In addition, problematic heating systems must have caused many a fire as well. Fireplaces were inefficient heaters, and therefore braziers were in frequent use. To save fuel, members of a family might sit around the brazier with a cover over the glowing coals to keep the heat from dissipating. Uncountable conflagrations must have started from an overturned brazier, or else from a blanket catching fire. After all, Istanbul could get very cold: a Moroccan ambassador, who visited the sultan's court in the late 1500s, filled his report with descriptions of furs and other devices for keeping warm; but then he had the misfortune of visiting the Ottoman capital during the late autumn.³⁶ In the cold winters of the Little Ice Age, when the Golden Horn occasionally froze over, life must have been very difficult, as freezing winters generated a cortège of illnesses, from common colds to pneumonia.

Urban fires, or sources of disaster: Part 1

Given the dangers of fire especially in Istanbul, we will, in this section only, invert the order earth–water–air–fire suggested by traditional cosmology and discuss the dangers of fire, before moving to those of the earth, water and air.³⁷

Istanbul's precarious position was partly due to the wind patterns. In summer, we typically encounter northeasterlies (Poyraz), while in winter, northwesterly (Karayel) or northerly (Yıldız) winds are dominant. Occasionally, there will be warm spells in winter, when the southwesterly Lodos passes over the city.³⁸ As the by now numerous studies of Istanbul conflagrations have shown, these winds, often of considerable strength, drove fires in broad swathes through the walled city; and only the sea, the cessation of wind or the destruction of all inflammable materials eventually stopped their progression.³⁹ Fires spread so rapidly because, apart from mosques, other pious foundations, and the palace of the sultans, the city's buildings were made of wood. Even most viziers' palaces had been constructed of this fragile material, with the exception of the complex put up by İbrahim Paşa (d. 1536), the one-time favourite and grand vizier of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent; albeit in much altered form, this complex has survived – in part – to the present day.⁴⁰

Some contemporaries have wondered why rich people stuck to wooden houses. Presumably the poor had few alternatives, as stone and brick would have been too expensive. The Armenian scholar Eremya Çelebi Kömürcüyan (1637–95), who had experienced the disastrous fire of 1660 and discussed it with some fairly wealthy people, recorded the purely material reasons that they gave him. From these people's perspective, it was a major consideration that a wooden house could be more spacious than a dwelling built of stone. Eremya apparently disapproved, given the enormous destruction and losses of property due to fires.⁴¹ In any case, it is noteworthy that the people questioned did not say that only religious and public buildings deserved the honour of being built in stone, or that it behoved ordinary subjects of the sultan to show their deference by building only in perishable materials. If such opinions circulated, seemingly the sources known today do not record them.

In many cases, urbanites had enough advance information to escape on time, even if they might lose most of their possessions. However, there were exceptions: thus an author named Derviş Efendi-zâde claimed that in the great Istanbul fire of 1782, more than 400 and closer to 600 persons perished in the Şehzade mosque complex, where they had sought refuge in the – stone-built – mosque, the courtyard and even the ablutions fountain.

As the latter had run dry, it did not provide any protection.⁴² Certainly in the emotional turmoil caused by a major conflagration, reliable figures were difficult to obtain; but the number of deaths must have been appreciable, especially when people rushed into collapsing houses to save at least their most valuable property.

Sources of disaster, Part 2: Disputes arising from urban fires

In addition to human suffering, fires also caused public order problems. When shops and workshops had been destroyed, the pious foundations owning them suffered revenue losses and might curtail their services. In response, some of the disgruntled beneficiaries must have protested, litigated, or even rioted. Furthermore, if the foundation's reserves did not permit rebuilding, administrators might have to grant long leases to whoever was able and willing to invest in reconstruction. However, long leases often meant decreasing revenues from rents; and such arrangements also facilitated abusive takeovers of foundation property by a variety of power-holders.

Other public order problems might ensue, when workspace had become scarce and the administrators of pious foundations tried to profit from high demand to increase rents. The traveller Evliya Çelebi has provided a fine example from mid-seventeenth-century Istanbul: a certain rather modest shop had been spared by a serious conflagration; and the foundation administrators in charge rented it to a Jewish shopkeeper/artisan, to the detriment of the previous tenant Nalıncı (clog maker) Hüseyin Çelebi. This man was a dervish, who had steadfastly refused to vacate his shop in spite of the conflagration; moreover, Nalıncı Hüseyin had been the disciple of two other clog makers, who presumably also had combined their craft with the exercise of saintliness.⁴³ According to Evliya, the Jewish tenant soon perished in an accident, whether due to natural or man-made causes remaining unknown.

With similar problems in mind, the official historiographer Şânîzâde Mehmed 'Atâ'ullah (c. 1770–1826) discussed Istanbul conflagrations at some length.⁴⁴ He noted acrimonious disputes concerning the reconstruction of churches destroyed by fire, with Muslims and Christians bandying about accusations and counter-accusations. In this context, Şânîzâde reported *in extenso* on the deliberations of what was apparently a committee to suggest ways and means of fire prevention. However, the author noted, perhaps in a resigned fashion, that in spite of the protection that lower densities would give, wealthy people were unlikely to build their houses far enough apart.⁴⁵ Şânîzâde also was aware that fires facilitated robberies: thus he recorded that during a conflagration in the area of the Grand Bazaar, the

guards prevented major damage to the merchants' goods by closing the doors to all comers.

The author also dwelt on the virtues of building in stone, and noted with approval that the fire just discussed had left the two covered markets (*bedestans*) unscathed.⁴⁶ In this context, he also noted that in cities like Paris, London or Vienna, streets of standard width helped to contain the danger – he may not have known that building regulations often remained a dead letter in the poorer quarters of any city.

Last but not least, certain fires might have been deliberately set. While proof was mostly impossible, rumours kept flying around: thus at the end of the sixteenth century, the chronicler and bureaucrat Selaniki Mustafa recorded accusations that certain officers, who had been removed from their command, seemingly encouraged their former soldiers to set fires, so as to place their successor in an impossible position. In the end, banishment of the presumed arsonists seems to have ended the affair.⁴⁷

Sources of disaster, Part 3: Air and water, or storms at sea

On land, winds might spread fires; and storms at sea were just as disastrous, with those of the Black Sea especially fearsome. From the seventeenth century we have the story of Evliya Çelebi, who described his personal experience of shipwreck in some detail.⁴⁸ When his boat was some distance south of Balaclava, but as yet far away from the Anatolian coast, a violent storm erupted and the ship soon foundered. Claiming to have kept some self-control by means of pious recitations, Evliya boarded the ship's emergency boat, though only after having won a fierce struggle with some non-Muslims. Washed up on the western coast of the Black Sea, along with some masterless slaves he had appropriated, the traveller owed his survival to the hospitality of the Bektaşî dervishes of Keliğra or Sarı Saltık (now in Romania).

For all its rhetorical embellishments, Evliya's account shows not only the violence of a Black Sea storm, but also how the struggle for naked survival was dominated by the principle of 'every man for himself'. In this section of his travelogue, Evliya apparently realized the practical benefits of his piety; for he stressed that this quality permitted him to retain control of himself and thus of the situation. Perhaps he even thought that he had received a special grace from God; for, after all, not only the 'unbelievers', but also some of his Muslim friends, had succumbed to the hardships of the shipwreck.

Other stories involving miraculous escapes from Black Sea storms are part of the saint's legend (*menakıbnâme*) of Hacı Bektaş; while the surviving text seemingly took shape in the late 1400s or early 1500s, the

oldest surviving manuscript only dates to the seventeenth century. Thus a non-specialist in Bektaşî lore cannot possibly date the individual episodes, some of which may be seventeenth-century additions. Two such stories refer to the saint's intervention when ships were about to founder in a Black Sea storm (see Chapter 4).⁴⁹ We do not know whether sailors with an inclination toward the Bektaşî order often invoked Hacı Bektaş when in danger of shipwreck. But certainly the two stories can be read as an encouragement to do so.

Sources of disaster, Part 4: The quaking earth

Last but not least: the earth, which especially in Istanbul, could be a major source of dangers, as this city lies in an area of fault lines, where earthquakes are fairly frequent. Among early modern disasters, that of 1509 has attracted considerable attention: two contemporaries, namely the Ottoman chronicler Ruhi and the famous Venetian diarist Marino Sanuto, have relayed fairly detailed information. Ruhi may have seen the disaster happen, while Sanuto had received the news through letters sent to Venice by eyewitnesses. In Istanbul and Galata, 4–5,000 persons apparently lost their lives. While Aya Sofya escaped lightly, there was serious damage to the mosque of Mehmed the Conqueror (r. 1451–81) and that of the current Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512). The Byzantine land and sea walls also suffered; and reportedly, the town of Gelibolu/Gallipoli was totally destroyed.⁵⁰ Despite the distance, observers as far afield as Cairo and Transylvania also experienced this quake.

Anatolia suffered from a sequence of earthquakes during the seventeenth century, with Ankara a major victim. In 1668, part of the centuries-old citadel walls collapsed. Apparently not too many people lost their lives, as most of the inhabitants had fled in good time.⁵¹ This quake was part of an encompassing series affecting other localities as well, whose troubles did not find their way into the surviving sources.

In the eighteenth century, Istanbul was afflicted by two near-contemporary disasters (1754 and 1766).⁵² The latter quake caused the collapse of the Fatih Mosque, one of the premier edifices of Istanbul, and also of the mausoleums of Mehmed the Conqueror and Princess Gülbahar; only the colonnade of the courtyard was left standing. All three edifices were subsequently rebuilt, in the style of the late eighteenth century.⁵³

Throughout, the historian of material culture would have an easier time if Ottoman miniature artists had produced more images of earthquakes, floods, fires and storms. But this is not the case, as miniatures were expensive and normally did not circulate beyond the palace or, at most, some highly placed provincial officials, who might even sponsor a few

painters.⁵⁴ An exceptional miniature, from a Baghdad manuscript, thus shows Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi saving a ship; perhaps the patron was an adherent of this saint. But most highly placed personages apparently did not spend money on images that did not show a well-ordered world deferring to a glorious sultan. Moreover, earthquakes, floods, storms and – to some extent – fires were natural phenomena; and in the view of many office-holders – at least if writing in an official capacity – whatever went wrong in this world was the fault of human beings. Yet even if the record is sparse, natural disasters existed; and they also are partly responsible for the limited number of material culture samples that we can study today.

Tulips, a great gift of the earth

Yet some such examples remain; and we will now turn to the association of material culture with nature. Given the bright colours of the tulip opulently ornamenting Istanbul during the month of April, this flower will stand for beauty, one of the major benefits nature has vouchsafed to people. As we will see, this consideration is not a mere invention of a twenty-first century historian, but was also present in the minds of Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) and his officials.

Fifteen varieties of tulip exist naturally in the former Ottoman provinces that today make up the Republic of Turkey. The plants do well in rocky, mountainous territory with limited rainfall; and the bulbs survive cold winters.⁵⁵ But they are rather adaptable, prospering in Istanbul where winters are mild and spring rains common, to say nothing of the extensive tulip fields in the cool and humid Netherlands.

Tulips already decorated sixteenth-century Ottoman gardens; and several high officials of the 1500s, including Ebu's-Su'ud Efendi (1490–1574), the chief of the juridical and religious hierarchy (*şeyhülislam*) under Süleyman the Magnificent, acquired reputations as connoisseurs and cultivators of tulips, hyacinths and jonquils.⁵⁶ A seventeenth-century author of a book on flowers named Ali Çelebi claimed that Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) had been a devotee of flowers and that the famous dervish saint Üsküdarî Mahmud Efendi, a contemporary of this sultan, had blessed the seeds from which beautiful flowers were to emerge.⁵⁷ Kâtip Çelebi (1609–57) the well-known bibliographer, chronicler and geographer, apparently raised hyacinths, and a blue variety was attributed to his efforts as a grower. Moreover, a certain Memikzade Mehmed Efendi, who lived in the second half of the seventeenth century and worked as a scribe (*tezkiireci*), reputedly gave the grand vizier Kara Mustafa Paşa (d. 1683) a bulb which the latter had coveted, receiving 40 gold coins as a gift in return. However, Mehmed Efendi supposedly later regretted this transaction and wished that

he had destroyed the bulb instead, unfortunately without specifying the reason.⁵⁸ Thus the cultivation of flowers and especially tulip growing were a favourite pastime among members of the Ottoman elite, although apparently in the 1600s, some people were critical of this passion; for Ali Çelebi the flower lover felt it necessary to say that flowers were worthy of respect and consideration and that it was inappropriate to put people down because they spent time on their cultivation.⁵⁹ We do not know for sure who Ali Çelebi alluded to; but possibly the religious extremists known as the Kadızadeliler opposed not only dervishes but also the flowers which the latter had blessed. Be that as it may, Ottoman elite figures were passionate about flowers and especially tulips well before the beginning of the so-called 'tulip period' (*lale devri*, 1718–30), which in the twentieth century had a reputation for excessive hedonism and luxury, a view that present-day historians tend to discount.⁶⁰

But even if we reject the notion that the Ottoman elite of the early 1700s spent its time in pleasure-seeking and the pursuit of European-style novelties, it remains true that, during this period, a few tulip varieties became very expensive.⁶¹ Therefore the sultan's officials felt compelled to issue a list of maximum prices (*narh*, dated to 1138/1725–26).⁶² At least as interesting as the list of poetic tulip names and their commercial values recorded in this text is the reasoning by which the authors of the decree justified their move. They began by explaining that the 'pleasant nature' of the population of Istanbul had long involved a fondness for flowers. In addition, these people had cultivated the native tulip (*lale-i Rumî*), because its contemplation was a means of perceiving the greatness of God; thus contemplating tulips was a pious act, quite compatible with elegant manners. While the court resided in Edirne, the prices of flowers had been in decline; the text evidently referred to the half-century before 1703, when the newly enthroned Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) had been forced to promise that he would once again live in the Ottoman capital. Presumably the officials authoring the edict meant to say that the absence of the court, and the insecurity of the times, had limited demand for flowers. But after the sultan's return to Istanbul, peace and opulence once again prevailed; and court requirements boosted demand.

But now, the sultan's officials declared, some greedy people had increased prices 'five- to ten-fold'. Quite openly, the decree stated that this situation was contrary to the interests of the Ottoman elite, whose members, after all, were most likely to purchase expensive tulips. Therefore the sultan had decided to promulgate a set of fixed prices: the most valuable flower was the *nîze-i rîmmânî* (ruby-coloured spear), which could legally be sold for the substantial sum of 50 *guruş*; according to extant illustrations, this was a red flower with petals so thin and pointed that they appeared like

the teeth of a comb.⁶³ There was also only one tulip valued at 40 *guruş*, and all the others were much cheaper. Tulip-lovers with little money to spend could obtain flowers for a single *akçe* – at this time, the *guruş* was usually valued at 120 of these petty coins. In fact the variety called *rûhü'l-kulûb* (spirit of hearts), in spite of being so cheap, had a recognized grower, a certain Veli Efendi.⁶⁴ The post-mortem inventory of a tulip grower deceased in 1169/1750 similarly contained a range of flowers at vastly differing prices.⁶⁵ Thus not every tulip-fancier needed to ruin himself and his family.

Beauties and defects

Şeyh Mehmed Lalezari, whose work was translated into German and annotated by the former Prussian chargé d'affaires in Istanbul and assiduous book collector Heinrich F. von Diez (in office 1784–91), went into great detail about the qualities expected from a tulip or narcissus.⁶⁶ In an abridged fashion, Mehmed Aşki, who in 1212/1797–98 wrote another treatise on tulips, also defined the beauties and defects of this flower: the petals were to be of a single colour and bend outward; at the very most, two colours were acceptable. Petals with feathered ends were considered defective, and flowers with inner petals smaller or less numerous (*nakis*) than those forming the outer ring were also of low quality.⁶⁷ The most important 'flower books' of the 1600s and 1700s have recently been edited, together with translations into modern Turkish; and thus we now possess a more immediate access to the aesthetic preferences of Istanbul's tulip fanciers.⁶⁸ At times veritable committees, in which the authors of tulip treatises participated, judged the results of the growers' efforts; they might classify the flowers as excellent (*âlâ*), good (*karib âlâ*), medium (*evsat*) and poor (*edna*).⁶⁹ As the numerous illustrations from the 1600s, 1700s and early 1800s show, the ideal Ottoman tulip had long, slender and pointed petals.

However, from the illustrations published by Yıldız Demiriz, we can conclude that early modern tulip growers probably defined the term 'of a single colour' differently than we might do today. Thus a tulip with very long pointed petals – which in spite of their delicate structure, managed to stand up straight – in the eyes of a present-day observer features two shades of pink, the inside of the petals being darker than the outside. However, the caption, probably contemporaneous, defines the flower as being *yek-renk* or of a single hue.⁷⁰ Even so, these images confirm that *yek-renk* flowers, especially those yellow or red, were popular among connoisseurs, while white tulips were exceptional.⁷¹ Apparently the very dark purple hue, so esteemed by European growers, in Istanbul was limited to bicoloured tulips; hyacinths by contrast might feature a shade of violet approaching black.⁷²

Given the interest of high Ottoman dignitaries in Süleyman's time, it is not surprising that in his embassy memoir, the Habsburg ambassador Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1522–91) recorded having seen tulips; after 1569, he used his contacts in Istanbul to import samples to Vienna. It was Busbecq's friend, the botanist Carolus Clusius, who by means of his publications spread the fame of the tulip within Latinate Christianity.⁷³ In fact a few Europeans with botanical interests had already taken note of this flower somewhat earlier on; but their work did not become as popular as that of Busbecq and Clusius. In the Netherlands during the early seventeenth century, the tulip became an object of fashion, sociability, high esteem and financial speculation, the latter followed by a collapse of market prices (see the Introduction).⁷⁴ But that is a different story.

(PLATE 36) TULIPS 'IN A GARDEN', AS DEPICTED IN FAIENCE

Tulips at the height of their popularity ornamented not only textiles and books, but also 'real' gardens; and this fact is reflected in a faience vase today in the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁷⁵ For this piece, dated to about 1575, shows tulips together with carnations on elegantly curving stems. Remarkably, while many carnations feature the brilliant tomato red that was a hallmark of İznik products in the second half of the sixteenth century, the tulips are a rather dark blue – yet in the 1700s, bright red seems to have been the favoured colour in this flower; presumably the artist had given his imagination free rein. But, just possibly, he was alluding to the purplish tulips that occasionally occurred in eighteenth-century images, and which may have existed earlier on as well. According to some growers of the 1700s, these dark tulips were of European origin.⁷⁶ Admittedly in 1575, the famous 'black' tulips all the rage in seventeenth-century Europe had not as yet emerged.

(PLATE 37) A PRODUCT OF THE EARTH, DISTRIBUTING WATER:
A FOUNTAIN PANEL OF FAIENCE

Unfortunately, we do not know very well where the faience panel presented here had originated, and therefore we cannot link it to the water supply of any specific city.⁷⁷ Art historians have suggested that faience masters working in Diyarbekir, with or without connections to the better-known manufacturers of İznik, produced the panel in question.⁷⁸ In any case, we may assume that, similarly to Istanbul custom, the water that once flowed through this fountain panel had arrived through a system of pipes owned by a pious foundation.

Being of faience, the panel once again consists of products of the earth. It is visibly a fragment, for the bottom has been cut off in such a way that the entire lower border has disappeared. Thus the panel must have been reused, not a rare practice; reuse might even occur centuries after the time of manufacture. As in this instance, reused panels might be cut, so as to fit into the new environment. Possibly the donor, a certain Abdülhalim Efendi, already owned the item when he decided to have a fountain constructed. After all, the relevant inscription does not say that the tiles had originally been made for a fountain.

Nothing more is known about Abdülhalim Efendi, who did not mention his patronymic as was normal in the Turkish-speaking world. Nor did he introduce himself as the father of such-and-such a person, as was common among speakers of Arabic; however, he expressed the hope that his descendants might enjoy long lives – so presumably, he possessed at least one son. Moreover, the title ‘efendi’ in the early 1600s was usually the privilege of people with an advanced education, probably in a *medrese*.

Doubtless the donor had wished to gain both spiritual and worldly merit; and a public fountain would have been a way of doing so.⁷⁹ As previously noted, before the late 1800s it was a rare privilege even in Istanbul to possess a domestic water supply. Therefore a public fountain was always a service to local people; and by providing a colourful decoration, Abdülhalim Efendi would have ensured that his generosity did not pass unnoticed.

(PLATE 38) THE AIR: ROSE WATER SPRINKLERS AS SOURCES OF ENJOYMENT

In Mediterranean and Near Eastern civilizations, the use of sweet-smelling substances had been customary since antiquity; primary sources most often mention aromatics used in religious services. But at the courts of rulers and in wealthy homes, perfuming the air or the persons of visitors also formed an element of hospitality. Thus Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689–1762) briefly mentioned that at her visits to the wives of the grand vizier and the latter’s representative the *kâhya*, servant girls perfumed the room with aloes wood and amber.⁸⁰ Otherwise, very little is known of fumigating and perfuming in non-religious contexts; after all, smells, especially delicious ones, are notoriously impermanent. Even where the Ottoman court is concerned, primary sources are few; therefore the recent and pioneering article by Nina Ergin concentrates on the olfactory environment of religious sites.⁸¹

Some people preferred to use odoriferous substances that did not require burning, including the essences of flowers such as jasmine. But by

far the most common substance of this kind was rose water, occasionally used in huge quantities. There is even a record of an entire building being washed with this substance after the completion of a major construction task.⁸² But normally rose water appeared in modest quantities; and Evliya recorded that the sellers of starch pudding (*palude*) gave their customers 'a little extra' by sprinkling some rose water over their wares.⁸³ In the Ottoman world, this substance was also used in funerary ceremonies.

Unfortunately, there is no official record or miniature documenting the parade described by Evliya Çelebi, which celebrated the beginning of the campaign undertaken by Murad IV (r. 1623–40) against the Safavids. For here the author has given a brief description of how rose water arrived in the hands of the consumers.⁸⁴ On the one hand, there were the normal shops, supposedly 41 in number, which employed 70 persons; the guildsmen concerned paraded through the city sprinkling the bystanders with rose water and other odoriferous substances.⁸⁵ On the other hand, there were women from Edirne selling rose water in front of the Istanbul covered market, who had brought their wares to the Ottoman capital in large copper kettles. Presumably this rose water came from their home town; for when describing Edirne, Evliya had good things to say about the local rose gardens and their product. Today the manufacture of this commodity is still of significance in nearby Bulgaria.⁸⁶ By the way, Evliya's remark also is interesting because we know so little about women whose husbands could or would not support them, and how they might make ends meet.

To dispense rose water, special flasks with a pear-shaped body and a long neck were in common use, with lids attached to keep the odour from escaping. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the Jingdezhen producers brought out models especially for Muslim markets, including water pipes and rose water sprinklers.⁸⁷ These Chinese items continued to attract Ottoman customers, who sometimes had their flasks embellished by decorated metal necks of silver or gilt copper. We might even encounter a coral stopper, as in the item shown here.⁸⁸ Such additions might be contemporaneous, but could also be added when the flask in question was over a century old.⁸⁹ Perhaps the owners valued the piece as an heirloom or antique. But perhaps it was simply a case of 'waste not, want not'.

(PLATE 39) IN LIEU OF FIREPLACES AND BRAZIER: A STOVE IN THE
BALKAN STYLE

In Ottoman Istanbul, as noted, what heating existed came from braziers (*mangal*) that contained still-glowing wood or charcoal, or else from open

fireplaces. Braziers could be large and luxurious, made out of bronze or brass. However, metals being expensive, presumably the great *mangals* surviving in museums came from very opulent households. Open fireplaces also might be decorative items, subject to current architectural styles. Examples in private homes that survive more or less in their original forms date mainly to the early 1800s – put differently, to the very end of the period covered here. Some opulent examples are on view in the Çakırağa Konağı in the town of Birgi in western Anatolia.⁹⁰ Here the builders had replaced the hood or conical structure that had capped Ottoman fireplaces of the 1500s, by rather complicated arrangements resembling multistorey buildings, but with the ‘storeys’ becoming progressively smaller as they approached the ceiling. Thus the set-up somewhat resembled a pyramid, with a decorative shield on top. Given the abundance of flowers ornamenting this arrangement, the viewer does wonder whether the source of inspiration may not have been the *nahils*, high, pyramid-shaped contraptions of wood decorated with blossoms that featured prominently in processions celebrating circumcisions and weddings.⁹¹

On the other hand, the frame of the fireplace in the Birgi residence rather resembled those common in contemporary Latinate Europe, with the difference that the mantelpiece in the Çakırağa Konağı was only a ridge and thus could not serve for the display of objects. It bears remembering that the house belonged to a rich family; and poorer residents of the same town, namely the students of the Kale Medresesi, or *medrese-in-the-fortress*, had to make do with a much more elementary arrangement, which happens to survive.⁹²

Against this background, the stoves that Hungarian archaeologists have studied in the Watertown (Víziváros) of Buda, in today’s Budapest, are especially noteworthy; moreover, similar stoves have been located in Ottoman Bosnia and Serbia. Albeit at a later date, we also encounter them in the Bulgarian provinces.⁹³ These structures differ from open fireplaces; for the fire is entirely enclosed by masonry which heats up; and, as a result, there is large warm surface conditioning the entire room, somewhat like a radiator in a present-day building. The fire is not accessible from the room being heated; wood or charcoal are loaded, and the ashes cleared out, through an opening situated in a hallway. Thus combustibles and ashes do not dirty the main room; perhaps this arrangement also presupposes a stricter separation between masters and servants, with the latter allowed access only to provide food, tobacco pipes or coffee. These stoves generally have a base, rectangular or else polygonal, crowned by a smaller top and decorated with green or yellow round tiles inserted into the body.

A similar type of heating was common in central and north-western Europe; comparable structures also dotted the reception rooms of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Bavarian and Austrian chateaux.⁹⁴ Stoves made out of clay or masonry could be decorated with coloured tiles; and in addition there were constructions entirely made of faience or earthenware, allowing for even more elaborate ornamentation. It was very common to adorn the tops; for differently from Russian custom, people did not sit or lie on top of the stove.⁹⁵ At present, we do not know whether there was any connection between the Ottoman stove patterns of the Balkans and their counterparts in other regions of the world.

Slowly but surely, as suggested by the Hungarian archaeologists Tibor Sabján and András Végh in their reconstructions, reproduced here, the stoves from Serbia, Bosnia and the Watertown of Buda, with or without bases, seem to have travelled the length and breadth of the Balkans.⁹⁶ These two scholars have suggested Ottoman soldiers as agents of diffusion.⁹⁷ It is difficult to tell why Bosnian or Hungarian-style heating systems spread to certain parts of the Balkans, but not to others. For the choice between open fireplaces and stoves was not a merely practical matter: in eighteenth-century France, certain people preferred the fireplace for aesthetic reasons and, in some houses, the stove only warmed the reception room while other chambers – if heated at all – possessed fireplaces.⁹⁸ As for the English, their penchant for the open fireplace is well known. In the Balkans too, a host of unknown factors must have entered the equation.

In any case, when it came to heating arrangements, certain well-to-do inhabitants of Sarajevo, the Watertown of Buda and other localities deviated from the Istanbul or Bursa model that they followed in other matters. This observation is particularly intriguing in the case of Bosnia; for Sarajevo, in the late 1400s and especially the 1500s, acquired large and ornate mosques, theological schools and a covered market, becoming a showcase for Ottoman civilization ‘in the face of the infidel’. Thus the preference for a heating style different from that current in Istanbul is truly remarkable. Who knows, perhaps the people installing stoves in their dwellings simply put ‘ideological’ considerations aside so as to keep warm during the region’s harsh winters.

(PLATE 40) FIRES OUT OF CONTROL

While we will present only one item featuring disasters due to natural forces, this depiction of an Istanbul fire vividly impresses the viewer with the dangers threatening the city’s inhabitants. The miniature at issue comes from the so-called ‘Cicogna album’ in the Museo Correr in Venice.⁹⁹

Perhaps the compiler was Giovanni Battista Ballarino (d. 1666), for 11 years secretary to the Venetian ambassador (*bailo*), who thus hoped to share his considerable experience with his presumed successors. At the time, being a servitor of the *bailo* was a delicate position, as the Ottoman–Venetian war over Crete only ended in 1669, with the conquest of Kandiye/Candia (Heraklion).¹⁰⁰ In this, as in other projects, Ballarino may have had help from various dragomans, especially those of the Tarsia family. However, these people did not produce the artwork, about whose origin nothing definite is known; perhaps an Istanbul workshop was involved.

As the city had suffered a disastrous fire in 1660, presumably the two miniatures in the Cicogna album depict this event.¹⁰¹ Moreover, there survive other images of this catastrophe; a depiction by an Armenian artist is also extant and has been published.¹⁰² In literary terms, the fire of 1660 has been commented upon by several Ottoman authors, including – as noted – the Armenian scholar Eremya Çelebi and the Muslim author Kâtibzade.¹⁰³ As Eremya's family had once lost three houses in a single fire, the author must have been especially conscious of such disasters.¹⁰⁴

From Eremya's text, we learn that the grand vizier Köprülüzade Mehmed Paşa (c. 1575–1661) was extremely worried about the manner in which news of the disaster was presented to Sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1648–87). He even ordered the execution of a dignitary who, supposedly through the mediation of his wife who was an Ottoman princess, had sent the sultan's mother a report of the fire different from that submitted by the grand vizier. But quite apart from the contents of this missive, Köprülü may have been concerned about maintaining his monopoly of access to the sultan, which he had demanded and received when first taking office. In addition, the grand vizier probably wanted to avoid public speculation about the causes of the fire and the efficiency or incompetence of the firefighters, debates which might have damaged the sultan's prestige and legitimacy. Therefore the inhabitants of Edirne were forbidden to even discuss the event; this prohibition applied to viziers and other grandees, to say nothing of ordinary people.¹⁰⁵ Presumably in the non-Muslim milieu, close friends must have exchanged remarks that the grand vizier would have considered seditious: for when discussing a later conflagration, Eremya wrote that whenever the sultans' armies attacked Christian lands, the deity sent a fire in retribution.¹⁰⁶

Kâtibzade by contrast avoided politics, and in his brief poetic account highlighted the sufferings of the population. Particularly distressing is his account of people seeking refuge in the Vefa and Şehzade mosques; but these holy sites were not safe, nor did the courtyard of the Sultan Bayezid mosque provide any protection. The author did not accuse anybody; in his opinion, the firefighters had done their best, but been unable to even

mitigate the calamity. Thus, patience was the only commendable reaction; yet the author was quite aware that, while the well-to-do might take refuge in a still-surviving Bosphorus villa, the poor had lost everything.¹⁰⁷

What were the aspects of the disaster that Ballarino and the artists in his employment chose to emphasize? The picture shows a crowded town quarter entirely engulfed in flames, including several mosques and a structure with a pyramid-shaped roof that may belong to a palace. The lower level is entirely taken up by schematically drawn houses with sloping, tile-covered roofs, all on fire. Firefighters, some with turbans on their heads and others with high caps – perhaps an abridged version of janissary headgear – are attempting to pull down houses with what seem to be grappling hooks. In one of the buildings, featuring a series of domes and chimneys, we see two men, one with a turban and the other with a cap, who do not run to the gate although the latter is wide open. The structure could be an urban caravanserai or else a theological school; the former alternative is likely, if the high cap denotes a non-Muslim. Another figure rather sedately walks away with a sack on his shoulder, presumably containing the valuables he has managed to salvage. In the upper right-hand corner, three figures in turbans watch the conflagration; one of them has his hands raised in prayer. Further down, more or less in the centre of the picture, a man lies on the ground, unconscious or dead, a vivid reminder of the human catastrophe depicted. The artists have not shown any women and children.

*Conclusion: The circulation of 'earthly' goods and involvement
with natural events*

Despite this final image of disaster, the present chapter has mostly highlighted the more agreeable things of life: a beautiful flower and the people who had it depicted on their faience, a handsome fountain which hopefully did not run dry very often, an elegant dispenser of rose water arriving all the way from China and, last but not least, an efficient heating device. After all, as the Moroccan ambassador al-Tamghrūtī found out, it is difficult to appreciate even the glories of Istanbul, or the manifold goods available in its shops or markets, when one is freezing cold.¹⁰⁸

Customarily, authors will emphasize that their work is novel and unprecedented; yet some of the lessons to be learned from the present discussion are not new at all. For Heinrich Friedrich von Diez has already pointed out something that even today, many people like to forget: Ottoman subjects did not limit their concerns to war, politics and religion, nor was the interest in tulips a symptom of the idleness or futility of the eighteenth-century Ottoman elite. On the contrary, contemplation of a

beautiful flower might bring a person nearer to the deity; and a shared interest in tulips might bring members of the elite together with more modest folk. In spite of the sultan's attempt to control tulip prices by administrative fiat, the notion of the 'tulip period' as an age of unbridled consumption can surely be laid to rest.

I would like to stress quite a different aspect: in their attempts to cultivate 'perfect' tulips, Istanbul's gardeners – and their patrons – accumulated a good deal of knowledge about this species which had remained unknown to contemporary European botanists.¹⁰⁹ In fact, a present-day reader unfamiliar with the mysteries of growing tulips would have trouble understanding Mehmed Lalezari's work; for this author uses the – for us – arcane terminology of eighteenth-century Istanbul tulip aficionados. To overcome this difficulty, Diez must have collected information from gardeners, who told him how to distinguish a promising bulb from another that would probably not produce a flower of any distinction; and the translator also learned a few tricks, which would help him make the best out of a mediocre bulb. This procedure somewhat resembles that applied by today's historians of Ottoman material culture, who need information from the workaday world to understand their source texts. But at the same time they also employ the reverse procedure, namely they collect information from written sources that will permit them to appreciate the hard work and competence that has gone into the manufacture of a valuable object or the cultivation of a beautiful tulip.

To visualize the benefits of ample flowing water, we have contemplated the fountain panel today in the Hood Museum in Hanover, New Hampshire; its style rather resembles that current in sixteenth-century İznik, although probably the manufacturers had worked in or around Diyarbekir. In that city, artists were familiar with many aspects of the technology of faience-making, which dated back to the period in which Diyarbekir had been a capital of the Ak Koyunlu dynasty. Thus the panel shown here is a testimony to the links of early Ottoman artwork to a contemporary empire of the Iranian world. Surely there are other connections involved as well, but they are beyond the competence of the present author.

When perfuming the air, Ottoman subjects used a local product, namely rose water; but as containers they often fancied Chinese porcelain vessels, or else faience imitations produced locally. In quite a different sense, local traditions seemingly were important to builders and householders of Sarajevo and Buda's Watertown, when they constructed masonry stoves instead of Istanbul-style fireplaces. On the other hand, the miniature showing a catastrophic Istanbul conflagration, and the 'Cicogna album', of which it forms a small part, is probably the product

of collaboration between artists from Istanbul and Venice, perhaps intended for the instruction of future Venetian diplomats. Once again, this chapter thus demonstrates the numerous connections, through conquest, trade, travel, and diplomacy, which linked the material world of the Ottoman elite to China, the Timurid and Ak Koyunlu empires, in addition to a number of commercial and cultural centres in Latinate Europe. Involvement with the realm of nature – and subjection to the latter's requirements – were concerns common to all early modern societies and, in a different mode, to those that succeeded them.

CONCLUSION

Revising, reworking, adapting

Our wanderings through the imaginary exhibition of elite artefacts having come to an end, it is time to formulate what are – at least in my opinion – the main points of the exercise. First of all, many if not most of the pieces discussed in this volume have been made by more hands and minds than evident at first glance. When producing an item ‘from scratch’ and to order, there must have been exchanges between the artist/artisan and his client; as these dialogues were usually oral, the surviving documents record them but rarely. The correspondence between Princess Hatice Sultan, sister to Selim III (r. 1789–1807) and her designer Antoine Ignace Melling (1763–1831) is one of the very rare exceptions.¹

But such commissions were often only the first stage in the lifespan of a given article. Given widespread poverty even in Istanbul, to say nothing of provincial cities, and a limited number of goods in the hands not only of the poor, but also of people of some substance, certain items have been repaired and revamped, sometimes more than once. A broken piece of porcelain may simply have been too valuable to discard. Or else changes in function have led to changes in form: when a Chinese flower vase was remade as a rose water sprinkler, a lid obviously became necessary. If the patron wanted something ‘special’, the artisan to whom he had entrusted the job of adaptation might turn a utilitarian addition into an adornment. Thus as a given object moved through space and time, it often changed its function and also its appearance, similarly to a person engaged on the journey of life.

There is thus a special fascination in items showing signs of *bricolage*, particularly apparent in the case of firearms: Ottoman manufacturers made gun barrels out of metal wound in spirals, a technique significantly lessening the danger of explosions. In consequence, we find European gun

owners adding Ottoman barrels to arms otherwise of non-Ottoman manufacture. Given the limits of my knowledge, I cannot follow the movements of Ottoman gun barrels across the Eurasian continent. But perhaps this technique, being successful, had more than one source: a contemporary biographer of the Mughal emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605) attributes this novelty to his illustrious sovereign. According to Abū'l-Fazl, it was Akbar who had pioneered the use of spiral-rolled metal sheets in manufacturing gun barrels.² Thus there are three possibilities: the technique may have originated independently in two places, it may have spread eastward from the Ottoman Empire, or westward from India. At the same time, Ottoman gun fanciers who had acquired European pistols might have them redecorated according to the taste of the Istanbul elite. Wealthy owners also might prefer the cocks made by European gunsmiths, so that certain guns in today's museums are veritable composites.

Highlighting the changes that objects underwent on their migrations through space and time, the present study began with a grave marker commemorating a Roman legionary that became the door jamb of an Ankara mosque. Or in a different vein, the stylized images of the most important sites of Mecca and surroundings that had long embellished the pilgrimage certificates acquired by certain hajjis in the seventeenth century came to adorn faience panels placed in mosques. After having been visible only to elite figures, such images were now moved onto publicly visible tilework, which might remind the faithful of their obligation to perform the pilgrimage, if only they could get hold of the necessary funds.

Adaptations of a different kind were necessary when the sultans' subjects confronted seasonal – and unseasonal – heat and cold, as well as the need to transport water from often distant locations. Heating and cooling arrangements might be more or less efficient. It is a great pity that we have only written sources – and, to my knowledge, no imagery – documenting the collection, preservation and transportation of snow and ice, to cool beverages for elite men and women during the summer. For this activity occupied quite a few people; and the Ottoman Palace of the years around 1600 spent considerable amounts of money on ice brought in all the way from Bursa's Uludağ Mountains.³

In a different vein, the builders or owners of Anatolian dwellings devised various adaptations to the basic house plan so as to be comfortable in summer, catching the breeze in open verandas, or even constructing light and airy garden pavilions that their owners might be proud to see depicted on İznik plates of the early 1600s.⁴ However, in winter, life in these draughty wooden dwellings must often have been very difficult; and

it was probably more pleasant to spend the cold season in a room heated by a Bosnian-style masonry stove than to struggle with the vagaries of an open fireplace. Yet other kinds of adaptations were needed if the sultans' subjects wished to enjoy the smell of rose water, or simply view a variety of tulips in spring.

While Ottoman artisans found impressive solutions to certain environmental challenges, we must not forget the problems that remained unsolved. Thus water was difficult to obtain in Istanbul, though the city was/is situated on a peninsula; people might perish during a conflagration because the local fountains soon ran dry. Therefore firefighters usually tore down houses, an emergency measure which janissaries and others might abuse as a welcome pretext for robbery.⁵

Designs – and coffee cups – on their way through Eurasia

In quite a few instances, the arrival of a 'foreign' object in the Ottoman world was the first step in a process of adaptation. Yet other objects from remote places were used 'just as they were', excavated remnants testifying to their former owners' wealth and status. Admittedly not all objects discussed here were part of far-flung artistic or artisanal networks; but exchanges on various levels were common enough to make this issue into a central concern of the present study. Put differently, quite a few objects were the products of multiple exchanges; and at a time when goods only travelled if accompanied by people, the movement of objects and decorative motifs indicated human travels, although the latter might be short range while the items in question moved over long distances from one intermediary to another.

Thus the decoration of a piece of blue-and-white İznik faience might be inspired by Chinese models which had transited through Iran during the Timurid (1370s–early 1500s) and Safavid (1501–1722) periods. In the 1600s and 1700s – and perhaps earlier on as well – Arab merchants might carry Chinese porcelain to Egypt, while Dutch traders brought similar goods to Iran, where local potters and patrons developed designs that were interpretations of Chinese motifs, often of considerable originality. In the course of time, Chinese items or their Iranian adaptations reached the Ottoman world, where designers created their own versions of blue-and-white, which might include 'Chinese clouds', stylized peonies or else the scalloped borders, which had not originally been part of Middle Eastern traditions of faience manufacture.

But once arrived in the Ottoman world, the migration especially of elite objects might well continue. A Chinese-inspired İznik ewer or plate might be sold to an Ottoman military man stationed in the border province of

Budin (Buda) in modern Hungary. Perhaps this officer had received a king's ransom for some high level Habsburg prisoner. This cavalryman might well show off his expensive faience to his friends until, one day, somebody let it fall to the ground. Repairs proving impossible, the shards went to a garbage heap, from where during a modern excavation, archaeologists retrieved them; and the broken pieces wound up in the storehouse of the National Museum of Budapest or in a local Hungarian repository. But perhaps the shards could be glued together; and the item is now in a museum showcase. Alternatively, a Hungarian, Habsburg, Italian or Polish nobleman might purchase or even order a piece of İznik blue-and-white faience directly from the producers; and, after his family had died out, the precious piece ended up in a museum of central or western Europe.

We can spin the story out yet further: in Hungarian excavations, a few original Chinese cups have turned up, which it is likely had arrived by the maritime route. Thus we may envisage export porcelain from Jingdezhen reaching the Chinese coast, where merchants picked it up and carried it to the Malay Peninsula or to an Indian port; at present the exact routes taken by sixteenth- or seventeenth-century Asian porcelain traders on their way from China to India apparently remain unknown. From the coast of western India, as we have seen, Muslim merchants carried the porcelain across the Indian Ocean to Jeddah, or sometimes to Suez, where their Egyptian business partners took over. From Egypt, many if not most of these coffee cups must have gone to Istanbul.

But some items travelled even further. Cups and shards from today's Hungary must have transited through the Ottoman capital, or else through a commercial mart such as Sarajevo, which, at least in the 1700s, possessed a direct commercial link to Egypt.⁶ But at present, we do not know whether this Bosnia–Egypt connection was active already in the 1500s and 1600s, at the time when the Ottoman sultans controlled Hungary. As this summary shows, the available sources leave many questions unanswered; and it remains to be seen whether future archaeological work on shipwrecks will clear up at least some of the mysteries connected with the movements of Chinese porcelain.

The trouble with movement: migrating images and outsiders' perspectives

Other long-range contacts, and the attendant problems of interpretation, are connected with imagery. Thus we possess an Indian miniature showing an Ottoman ambassador, who had appeared at the Mughal court sometime in the mid 1600s. His identity remains somewhat nebulous; and we do not know what – if anything – he brought back to Istanbul.⁷ But we

may at least speculate that certain Ottoman envoys were impressed enough by the flower reliefs ornamenting the Taj Mahal or similar Mughal monuments to bring back designs – or perhaps even a master artisan – all the way to Istanbul. To this somewhat hypothetical Ottoman–Indian connection, we perhaps owe the ‘Indianate’ designs ornamenting certain mid-eighteenth century Istanbul fountains.⁸

Yet more important were the single figure studies of Iranian masters such as Rezā-ye ‘Abbāsī (c. 1565–1635) and his followers; for they must have provided models for the famous miniaturist Abdülcelil Levni (d. 1732). Unfortunately, given our ignorance of Levni’s biography, we do not know how he had obtained access to the works of Iranian master(s), apart from a single album still in the Topkapı Palace library that he could have accessed without trouble.⁹ The captions of Levni’s single figure miniatures, which seem to have originated with the artist or his circle, quite often describe the subjects depicted as Iranian (*acem*) and sometimes even claim association with the court of the Shah.¹⁰ It is well known to specialists, yet bears emphasizing, that even after Ottoman artists had ‘found their own voices’ in the second half of the sixteenth century, the encounter with Iranian artwork continued to be a defining experience for many practitioners of the visual arts. Evliya Çelebi was well aware of this situation when he referred to the visits of Istanbul artists, and probably art lovers as well, to a set of decorative panels from the palace in Tabriz that had come to Istanbul as booty from the Iranian wars.¹¹

When focusing on the contacts between Ottoman and European artists, we find more ample documentation; yet numerous problems still remain intractable. We will begin with a relatively straightforward – and well-studied – subject, namely the portraits of Ottoman sultans.¹² Here we observe a constant back and forth between Istanbul and Venice, for sixteenth-century Ottoman miniaturists looked to Venetian artwork when out to convey an idea of the appearance of their rulers, including the earliest ones. However, presumably sophisticated patrons of such images, for example Sokollu Mehmed Paşa (d. 1579), knew very well that no contemporary portraits reflected the features of Osman Gazi (d. c. 1326) or Orhan Gazi (r. c. 1326–62). Yet for the representation of the dynasty, an image physically resembling the ruler depicted was apparently not essential, at least where the earlier periods were concerned. By contrast, when a miniature painter received a commission to depict contemporary sultans, such as Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–66) or his son Selim II (r. 1566–75), he was expected to make the ruler recognizable to those who had seen him. In this enterprise, Venetian and Northern Renaissance artwork might be helpful. Gülru Necipoğlu has pointed out that Ottoman and Venetian portraits of Selim II focus on the same physical

characteristics, such as his reddish beard and moustache, as well as his light complexion, indicating once again the frequent artistic exchanges between Istanbul and Venice during the later sixteenth century.¹³ Other convergences are less obvious, although Levni and Jean Baptiste Vanmour (1671–1737) may have had artistic and perhaps even personal contact.¹⁴

As noted, many sultans' portraits produced in Florence or Venice relied on the imagination, more than on eyewitness accuracy; but, even so, the patronage of Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa must have provided opportunities for Venetian draughtsmen from the entourage of the *bailo* to see the sultan 'close up'. An artist in Venice might then rework these drawings into fully fledged portraits. But if no such prominent sponsor was available, visiting artists from Latinate Europe might find it difficult to access the subjects of their depictions; even standing in a public place while drawing an Istanbul land- or cityscape might expose them to public suspicion. As Nurhan Atasoy has pointed out (see the Introduction), these men produced their best work when they could draw or paint at leisure, positioned on the terrace of an embassy or an isolated spot in the landscape.¹⁵ Thus the depictions of Istanbul personages by European draughtsmen/painters, or even by the Ottoman miniaturists, whose works appeared on the market in the 1600s, certainly were to some extent a product of the imagination.

Yet some of this artwork also showed a degree of realism. After all, the artists responsible for the seventeenth-century costume albums patronized by European visitors might have had access to the outer circles of the Ottoman court. These artists could depict lower-ranking court officials quite accurately and even caught occasional glimpses of the sultan and his grand vizier. Particularly, the parades which accompanied the monarch when attending Friday prayers or a public festivity displayed the highest dignitaries of the empire in the finery appropriate to their rank. The relative reliability of such imagery also explains why, from the 1700s onward, costume figures came to interest Ottoman elite patrons too: not only Levni, but also lesser artists like Fenerci Mehmed Efendi worked in a local, Istanbul context.¹⁶ Laura Hostetler has suggested that the elaborate ethnographic depictions produced for the Qing court may have owed something to contact with similar European images, and that the same contact was responsible for changing preferences in imagery at the sultan's court in Istanbul.¹⁷ Be that as it may, we still lack a convincing explanation why certain members of the Ottoman elite decided to focus on costume figures, as opposed to some other genre; after all, the availability of a certain type of image is not sufficient; the people who adopt it must have a reason to do so. Perhaps beginning in the late 1600s, there was a trend toward giving the everyday and intimate a larger role,

both in the arts and in literature; this issue needs more research and attention.

Traces of femininity

When referring to the intimate, it is hard to avoid thinking of elite women. Differently from what was customary at the Mughal court (see Chapter 3), miniature and gouache painters had no live models from which to work. In the best of cases, they may have viewed second-hand clothes that had once – really or supposedly – belonged to an elite woman. To depict the pose of the wearer, the draughtsmen/painters may have referred to the training in figure painting received in their respective homelands; or perhaps a friendly non-Muslim may have made a servant girl pose with the borrowed clothing. Furthermore, even if the heyday of ‘orientalism’ was still in the future, stereotypes about languid, ‘lazy oriental women’ were already being bandied about in the later 1600s; and such prejudices may have informed at least some of the surviving depictions by artists from Latinate Europe.

On the other hand, it is hard to deny that some of Levni’s females, supposedly from Iran or Bursa, exhibit somewhat erotic poses as well. While some historians might categorize this case as an early example of the trend toward ‘self-orientalizing’ observed among certain members of the Ottoman elite in the later 1800s, perhaps it makes more sense to say that the patrons of Levni and his ‘school’ quite simply enjoyed the erotic allure of beautiful young women and handsome young men.

The limits of imagery – and those of material objects

Perhaps the most difficult problems arise from the fact that Ottoman artwork, miniatures for the most part, has very specific topics and thus is not always germane to the aims pursued in this study. Apparently, members of the Ottoman elite who commissioned images wished to commemorate the military successes and Sunni piety of their rulers; they also were in the business of documenting courtly hierarchies and occasionally, festivities sponsored by the sultans. The lives of the subject population thus became relevant only in exceptional cases. Moreover, this imagery was confined to expensive books that only members of the sultan’s court were likely to ever see.

As a result, artisans and shopkeepers appeared but rarely, most prominently in the festival books of 1582 and 1720.¹⁸ In these two instances, the artists depicted elaborate parades, in which the ‘showcasing’ of artisans was only one element, albeit an important one. The workshops

and market stalls depicted in these two volumes thus were not intended as 'real' worksites; and the poverty of many vendors and artisans, who plied their trades in the streets or open-air marketplaces, was not a topic for depiction. Moreover, when it came to showing peasants at work, only a few exceptional European outsiders felt attracted to the topic; and evidently these people worked within stylistic conventions that we need to identify before embarking on an interpretation.

Thus when studying the material world, images, despite their obvious utility, will often be less helpful than surviving objects: textiles, shoes, or weaponry are direct testimonials to the work and skills of Ottoman artisans, and there is no intervening 'filter' conditioning our access, be it a lack of interest on the part of the sultans' elites, or else the 'orientalist' prejudices of European observers. Thus material objects allow fascinating glimpses of local practices and perhaps migrations: in this context, it is worth remembering the silver plate in the Sadberk Hanım Museum, probably manufactured in or around Bursa, which shows a young man acting as the scribe of St John (see Chapter 4). Supposedly this little-known saint, called St Prochoros, had ended his life as the bishop of Nicomedia/İzmit, only a short distance from Bursa; and the plate once belonged to the episcopal church of this latter city. If we knew more about the spread of the cult of St Prochoros, also attested at the monastery of St John on the island of Patmos, we might well find out more about the migrations of Orthodox people between the Aegean islands and western Anatolia.¹⁹

But for the period before about 1840, the survival rate of material objects is very low, especially where non-elite goods are concerned. Therefore in spite of an abiding interest in the possessions of ordinary people, we have been obliged to study objects belonging to highly placed persons, and sometimes even originating from the sultans' palace.

When attempting to interpret material objects ...

While precious historical sources, material objects pose their own thorny problems of interpretation, particularly since Ottoman archaeology is still in its infancy and communication between historians and archaeologists sometimes less effective than it should be. Roman archaeologists have posed the question to what extent the better-off inhabitants of, say, Gallia, Britannia or Pannonia adopted the culture of the imperial centre; as a corollary, they have tried to determine whether, perhaps, locals consciously rejected certain goods.²⁰ This is a question that historians of Ottoman material culture also encounter: on the one hand, for example, silk fabrics for Orthodox ecclesiastical use show designs harking back to Byzantium while, on the other hand, tulips and carnations in the

interstices of the figures make it clear that the textile in question was of Ottoman inspiration and manufacture. Under what circumstances were designs created for Muslim contexts acceptable in Orthodox church vestments, and where were the limits of this acceptability?²¹ Probably historians of the Ottoman world have not yet formulated questions of this kind as clearly as certain historians of the Roman Empire have done. Hopefully, further research will clear up some of our perplexities.

Even where Ottomanist scholars have noted that certain material objects occurred in certain contexts and not in others, the available sources, more often than not, do not allow us to satisfactorily answer many of the questions coming to mind. Thus windmills were in use around Alexandria, but not in the remainder of Egypt; and they were quite rare in the environs of Istanbul, in spite of numerous windy days.²² It is also somewhat enigmatic why Ottoman military men and administrators seem to have spread the Hungarian- or Bosnian-style stove all over the Balkan Peninsula; yet this practical invention never became popular in Istanbul.²³

In the not-too-distant future, further studies of Ottoman material life will hopefully remedy some of these deficiencies, which will have become painfully obvious to the readers of the present work. In particular, more emphasis needs to be placed on the fact that the sophisticated pieces discussed here were the work of artisans who often lived in poverty; this state of affairs has become especially clear in the case of Damascus about 1700, but must have applied to other cities as well.²⁴ These men and women probably never got to enjoy a piece of İznik faience or delicately embroidered cloth although it was they who had produced these pieces.

Ottoman artists/artisans working for 'the outside world'

Last but not least, the present study has confirmed that over the *longue durée*, the Ottoman elite continued to look toward Iranian models when aesthetic sophistication was in demand. In the period before 1840, design ideas from Italy and France were still of limited significance, although they were apparent in some areas, including the interior decoration of quite a few palaces and wealthy homes.

At the same time, Ottoman artists and artisans made contributions that found imitators and/or customers outside the empire's central provinces, as evidenced by the Istanbul-style decoration of the mid-eighteenth-century palace of the Crimean khans.²⁵ More importantly, when we look at the quantities of goods involved, Ottoman carpets found many buyers in Transylvania, until 1699 an autonomous principality under the sultans' suzerainty and after the Peace of Karlowitz, a foreign territory, ruled by the

Habsburgs in Vienna.²⁶ Further afield still, the noblemen of the seventeenth-century Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth adopted Ottoman costume and therefore bought quantities of Istanbul silks, Ankara mohair fabrics, and sashes. Admittedly, Iranian sashes were probably even more popular; yet the importation of the Ottoman variety prospered enough for some Ottoman Armenian expatriates to produce imitations on Polish territory.²⁷ After all, in spite of their often advertised role as the ‘bastion of the Christian world’ (*antemurale Christianitatis*), Polish noblemen also wanted to project an identity separate from that of the ‘core lands’ of Latinate Europe; and Ottoman imports were a means making that assertion believable. Furthermore, if the most recent interpretation of the fashion for *turquerie* is at all valid, elite figures in Latinate Europe during the late 1600s and early 1700s bought and copied Ottoman artefacts, because they regarded them as symbols of magnificence and cultivated ease.²⁸

It is thus through the study of objects in Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian, Hungarian and Austrian collections that we have come to appreciate an important truth: in the realm of material culture, the Ottomans certainly adopted ideas from the outside world, but they also produced items that found customers and admirers in eastern and central Europe.²⁹ The Ottoman world as a site for ‘intercultural’ encounters: taken by themselves, written sources could not have taught us this important lesson.

GLOSSARY

<i>Acem tüccarı</i>	merchant from Iran (Muslim or Armenian), trading in the Ottoman Empire
<i>Acemi oğlan</i>	candidate janissary
<i>Akçe</i>	silver coin; important in the 1400s and 1500s, it was later devalued and replaced by the <i>guruş</i>
<i>Âlâ</i>	excellent
<i>Askeri</i>	tax-exempt servitor of the sultan, in a military or bureaucratic capacity
<i>Avarız-ı divaniye</i>	taxes levied at first 'according to necessity' in wartime; by the 1600s, this became a regular tax, often quite burdensome
<i>Bailo</i>	resident ambassador of Venice in Istanbul
<i>Beylerbeyi</i>	senior governor
<i>Bogasi</i>	lining fabric, often from cotton
<i>Bora</i>	sodium
<i>Bozdoğan</i> or <i>topuz</i>	battle mace, later turned into an insignia of high rank
<i>Buława hetmanska</i>	(<i>Polish</i>) battle mace, used as insignia by the chiefs of the Polish nobility
<i>Çadır bezi</i>	solid fabrics, suitable for making tents
<i>Cebehane</i>	armoury

Celali rebellions	mercenary uprisings in the late 1500s and early 1600s
<i>Cepken</i>	fur-lined jacket, waist-length with long sleeves
<i>Çiçak</i>	Ottoman helmet; in German this term became <i>Tschägge</i>
<i>Çiftlik</i>	rural domain
<i>Çintamani</i>	a design of three balls or crescents composing a triangle or pyramid
<i>Dane</i>	(<i>perhaps</i>) white pilaf flavoured with a sprinkling of pepper
<i>Devşirme</i>	levy of Christian peasant boys, meant to serve the sultan as soldiers and sometimes as officials
<i>Dizdar</i>	garrison commander
<i>Edna</i>	of poor quality
<i>Efendi</i>	in the early 1600s, used for people with an advanced education, probably in a <i>medrese</i> ; but sometimes also denoting wealthy and/or educated Christian subjects of the sultan
<i>Entari</i>	robe
<i>Evsat</i>	of medium quality
<i>Ferace</i>	wide cloak, worn by women and also by religious scholars
<i>Firik</i>	immature wheat
<i>Francala</i>	fine white bread
<i>Frenk badıncanı</i>	(<i>late nineteenth-century term</i>) tomato
<i>Frenk inciri</i>	cactus fruit
<i>Gömlek</i>	shirt or chemise
<i>Guruş</i>	silver coin, in the 1700s often valued at 120 <i>akçe</i>
<i>Hamam</i>	public bath
<i>Herise, keşkek</i>	varieties of porridge
<i>Hırka</i>	(often fur-lined) jacket
<i>Hoşab</i>	fruit compote

<i>Hüccet</i>	witnessed document, suitable for presentation in the qadi's court
<i>Hunka</i>	artificial hills produced by villagers, to demarcate the Ottoman–Habsburg border
<i>İmaret</i>	(<i>here</i>) public kitchen
<i>Kâhya</i> of the grand vizier	representative of the grand vizier, gradually gaining in power and status
<i>Karayel</i>	northwesterly wind
<i>Kavuk</i>	quilted cap, supporting a turban
<i>Kul</i>	servitors and dependents of the sultan
<i>Kunst-und Wunderkammer</i>	(<i>German</i>) collection of natural phenomena as well as human artefacts from all over the world, popular among rich people between the 1500s and 1700s
<i>Lale devri</i>	'tulip period', name given to the years from 1718 to 1730 by some twentieth-century scholars
<i>Lodos</i>	southwesterly wind
<i>Mangal</i>	brazier
<i>Matara</i>	water flask, sometimes made into a precious object and insignia of rank
<i>Medrese</i>	theological-cum-juridical college
<i>Midye dolması</i>	stuffed mussels
<i>Muhtesib</i>	market inspector
<i>Mükemmel kapı</i>	well-appointed political household
<i>Nahil</i>	high, decorated, pyramid-shaped contraption of wood featuring in wedding and circumcision processions
<i>Narh</i>	administratively determined price
<i>Olagelene muhalif</i>	contravening 'what had always been done'
<i>Otağ-ı humayun, hünkâr çadırı</i>	tent housing the sultan
<i>Paça</i>	a gelatinous dish made from the trotters of sheep

<i>Palanka</i>	small forts protected by palisades rather than stone walls
<i>Palude</i>	starch pudding
<i>Panni tatarici</i>	(<i>Italian</i>) silk fabrics with small, frequently abstract designs with a lavish use of gold thread, popular in the 1300s and 1400s
<i>Potga, pasda, lapa</i>	varieties of porridge, sometimes flavoured
<i>Poyraz</i>	northeasterly wind
<i>Qadi</i>	judge in an Islamic court
<i>Reaya</i>	member of the subject population
<i>Rescate</i>	(<i>Spanish</i>) ransoming as practised by Mediterranean corsairs
<i>Rüstkammer</i>	(<i>German</i>) armoury
<i>Sakkos</i>	(<i>Greek</i>) vestment used in the Orthodox Church
<i>Şalvar</i>	wide gathered trousers, worn by men and women
<i>Sarıca</i> or <i>sekban</i>	young men from the subject class, hired as mercenaries for single campaigns only
<i>Sedir</i>	low dais, for sitting
<i>Sevai</i>	a fine silk fabric
<i>Şeyhülislam</i>	chief jurisconsult of the Ottoman Empire
<i>Seyyid, şerif</i>	descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, the only birth-based aristocracy reconized in the Ottoman Empire
<i>Sini</i>	food-tray
<i>Sipahi</i>	1. <i>Timar</i> (q.v.) holder 2. Member of the palace cavalry
<i>Sofra</i>	‘place-mat’ of leather, placed under the food-tray
<i>Tahmis-i kahve</i>	coffee-roasting equipment
<i>Tapu</i> land	land belonging to the sultan, which the cultivator holds as a tenant
<i>Tarhana</i>	yoghurt-based paste, for making soup

<i>Tersane</i>	naval arsenal
<i>Timar</i>	assignment of taxes, in exchange for military service in the cavalry
<i>Tuğ</i>	decorated horse-tail, used as an insignia of rank by commanders, from junior governors (<i>sancakbeyi</i>) to the sultan in person
‘Uşak’	carpets, sometimes made in the town of this name and sometimes in other parts of western Anatolia
<i>Vakfiye</i>	foundation charter
<i>Yek-renk</i>	of a single hue
<i>Yeniçeri</i>	an Ottoman foot soldier; the term has entered English as ‘janissary’
<i>Yıldız</i>	northerly wind
<i>Zarar-ı kassabiye</i>	‘the butchers’ losses’, a tax meant to subsidize the purchase of meat for the janissaries
<i>Zerde</i>	a sweet made with rice, saffron and grape syrup or honey, or with sugar if the household was opulent
<i>Zukak</i>	‘woven walls’ of tent-cloth separating the tents of senior personages from the general campsite

TIMELINE

Around 1300	The Ottoman principality emerges in north-western Anatolia
1330–31	Ibn Battūta visits Anatolia during the reign of Orhan Gazi (r. c. 1326–62), received by the latter's spouse Baylun/Bīlūn Hatun
1368–1644	China governed by the Ming dynasty
1389	Battle of Kosovo, after which Sultan Murad I is killed
1389–1402	Reign of Bayezid I Yıldırım; many Anatolian principalities conquered and Byzantium blockaded
1402	Bayezid defeated by Timur, ends his life as a prisoner
1402–13	Interregnum: Bayezid's four sons struggle for the throne
1413–21	Reign of Mehmed I, the winner in this war; the Green Mosque (Yeşil Cami) in Bursa is built in his honour
1420	Execution in Serres of Şeyh Bedreddin, religious scholar and mystic
1421–51	Reign of Murad II
1439	Ottoman conquest of Serbia
1444	Murad II defeats János Hunyadi near Varna
1448	Murad II defeats a coalition of European rulers in the second battle of Kosovo
1451–81	Reign of Mehmed II, known as Fatih

- 1453 Conquest of Constantinople, which during the reign of Fatih becomes the new Ottoman capital
- 1463–79 The Ottoman Empire and Venice confront one another in a ‘Long War’, Ottoman conquest of Euboea and Shkodër in Albania. Defeated, Venice is obliged to pay an annual tribute of 10,000 gold pieces
- 1474 Execution of Mahmud Paşa, grand vizier reputed for his piety
- 1481 Ottoman conquest of Otranto (southern Italy)
- 1481–1512 Reign of Bayezid II, known as ‘the Pious’
- c. 1490–1588 Life of Mimar Sinan, who defined the characteristics of Ottoman architecture
- 1509 Major earthquake in Istanbul
- 1512–20 Reign of Selim I, after a rebellion against his father Bayezid II
- 1514 Battle of Çaldıran; defeat, by Sultan Selim, of Shah Ismā‘īl I, the founder of the Safavid dynasty in Iran
- 1516–17 Selim I, overthrowing the Mamlūk Empire, conquers Egypt and Syria, also acquiring the Hejaz
- 1517 Babur, a descendant of Timur, defeats the army of the Lodi Sultan Ibrāhīm and founds a kingdom in northern India
- 1520–66 Reign of Sultan Süleyman I, known as ‘the Lawgiver’ or ‘the Magnificent’
- 1522–91 Life of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, travel writer and ambassador of Ferdinand I to Süleyman the Lawgiver
- 1521 Ottoman conquest of Belgrade
- 1522 Ottoman conquest of Rhodes
- 1526 Defeat of the Hungarian army at Mohács; death of King Lajos II and end of the mediaeval Hungarian kingdom
- 1529–95 Life of Archduke Ferdinand II of Austria, collector of arms and other artefacts
- 1529 First siege of Vienna

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| 1534–36 | Ottoman conquest of Iraq, Baghdad is taken |
| 1539 | Festivities in honour of the circumcisions of Princes Bayezid (1525–61) and Cihangir (d. 1552) |
| 1543–48 | Mimar Sinan builds a mosque and subsidiary buildings in honour of the recently deceased Prince Mehmed, known as the Şehzade complex |
| 1550–57 | Mimar Sinan is in charge of the construction of Süleyman's mosque complex, known as the Süleymaniye |
| 1564–75 | Mimar Sinan builds the Selimiye mosque complex in Edirne, for Selim II (r. 1566–74) |
| 1566 | Ottoman conquest of Szigetvár; Sultan Süleyman dies during the siege |
| 1571–73 | War between the Ottoman Empire and Venice, Cyprus is conquered and becomes an Ottoman province in spite of the victory of the Holy League at Lepanto (1571) |
| 1574–95 | Reign of Murad III, bibliophile and adherent of dervish masters |
| 1582 | Festivity in honour of the circumcision of Prince Mehmed, later Mehmed III |
| Late 1500s and early 1600s | Rebellions by mercenary soldiers all over Anatolia (Celali uprisings) |
| 1593–1606 | The Long War between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs |
| 1609–57 | Life of Kâtip Çelebi, bibliographer, geographer and chronicle writer |
| 1611–after 1683 | Life of Evliya Çelebi, traveller and travel writer |
| 1617 | Completion of the mosque and attendant charities, built for Ahmed I by Mimar Mehmed Ağa |
| 1618–22 | Reign of Osman II, or 'Young Osman', deposed and killed by the janissaries in 1622 |
| 1643–1715 | Reign of Louis XIV, the 'Sun King' of France |
| 1644–1912 | The Qing dynasty rules China. |

1648–87	Reign of Mehmed IV, known for his prowess as a hunter
1654	The young Mehmed IV is moved to Edirne, which becomes the de facto capital for about 50 years.
1658–1705	Reign of the Habsburg Emperor Leopold I
1658–1730	Luigi Ferdinando Marsili, a general during the Ottoman–Habsburg war and an adherent of the new-style ‘military science’
1660	Disastrous fire in Istanbul
1683	Second siege of Vienna by Kara Mustafa Paşa
1683–99	The Ottoman and Habsburg Empires at war over Hungary
1688	Habsburg conquest of Ottoman Hungary; major earthquake in Izmir
1699	Peace of Karlowitz: Transylvania becomes part of the Habsburg Empire and ceases to exist as an autonomous state
1703	The ‘Edirne event’: Sultan Mustafa II is deposed and his <i>şeyhülislam</i> Feyzullah murdered
1703–30	Reign of Ahmed III, required by the rebels to return the court from Edirne to Istanbul
1715	Ottoman reconquest of the Peloponnese; Venice finally withdraws from the eastern Mediterranean
1720	Great festivity to celebrate the circumcisions of the sons of Ahmed III
1730	Ahmed III is deposed in a military rebellion (Patrona Halil isyanı) and his grand vizier Nevşehirli İbrahim Paşa murdered
1732	Death of Abdülcelil Levni, one of the most accomplished Ottoman miniature painters
1737–39	Ottoman–Habsburg war ends in a Habsburg defeat
1740	Belgrade returned to the Ottoman Empire
1740–80	Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary and Bohemia
1740–86	Reign of Frederick II, King of Prussia

- 1768–74 Russian–Ottoman war, lost by the sultan’s armies: a turning point in Ottoman history
- 1789–1807 Reign of Selim III
- 1807 After an attempted institution of a ‘new model army’, Selim II is deposed in a military rebellion (Kabakçı Mustafa isyanı)
- 1808–39 Reign of Mahmud II
- 1821 Beginning of an anti-Ottoman uprising in the Peloponnese and in Moldavia and Wallachia.
- 1826 Mahmud destroys the janissary corps
- 1831–33 Defeat of the sultan’s armies by the governor of Egypt Muhammad (Mehmed) Ali Paşa and his son Ibrahim Paşa
- 1833 Greece becomes a separate kingdom, with significant informal control by Great Britain
- 1830s Centralization of the state apparatus, and especially the military: the palace becomes a centre of power
- 1839 Muhammad Ali Paşa’s forces defeat the army of Mahmud II near Nizip
- 1839 A few months after the death of Mahmud II, his son and successor Abdülmecid I (r. 1839–61) promulgates the Tanzimat edict

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Mraz (1980), pp. 47–50.
2. Kafadar (1995); Piterberg (2003); Tezcan (2010). Throughout, the term ‘Ottomanist’ will denote twentieth- and twenty-first-century studies of the Ottoman world, perhaps beginning with Köprülü (1966) whose first edition appeared in 1919.
3. I owe this consideration to my friend Selçuk Esenbel.
4. Among other institutions, the Sadberk Hanım and Pera Museums in Istanbul focus on these items.
5. For a catalogue see Atasoy (2013).
6. For a fine example from eighteenth-century Britain see Riello (2009), pp. 26–32.
7. Barnes (1997).
8. Atasoy and Raby (1989).
9. I was warned of such fakery when shopping for copper pots.
10. Kopytoff (1986).
11. Billington (2001).
12. Spallanzani (2007).
13. To my knowledge, the only narrative source on the famous Ushak carpets written by an Ottoman subject consists of a few lines by the indefatigable seventeenth-century traveller Evliya Çelebi: Evliya Çelebi (2005), p. 24. My colleague Elif Akçetin, a Sinologist, has asked for the reasons of Ottoman elite reticence with respect to the material world; unfortunately I am unable to answer this question.
14. Veinstein (1980); Riello (2013).
15. The basic study, which includes 90-odd sample inventories from Edirne, is still: Barkan (1966). Another important contribution is Öztürk (1995), which also contains sample inventories from seventeenth-century Istanbul. Most recently compare Karababa (2012). Using statistical techniques, the latter study is based on an examination of more than 350 Bursa inventories. On Damascus around 1700 see Estabiet and Pascual (1994), (1998), (2005), and (2011).
16. Estabiet and Pascual (2005).

17. Barkan ed. (1942); Kütükoğlu ed. (1978); eadem (1983).
18. Ahmet Kal'a et al eds (1997–98), vol. 1, *İstanbul Esnaf Tarihi 1*.
19. Faroqhi (2007c).
20. Hayashi and Aydın (2004).
21. Compare Terzi (2004), p. 155 showing that many private houses must have remained unrecorded.
22. Burke (2006).
23. Tarım Ertuğ (2014).
24. Denny (1970); Yurdaydın ed. (1976); Emiralioğlu (2014).
25. Erdmann (n.d.); Ydema (1990, reprinted 1991).
26. Atasoy (1986).
27. Stichel (1991).
28. Sint Nicolaas, Renda, İrepoğlu and Bull (2004).
29. Demandt and Engemann eds (2007).
30. Patlagean (1977); Demandt and Engemann eds (2007); Reece (2nd edn 2007).
31. I owe the expression 'document fetishism' to my colleague Halil Berktaş; see Berktaş (1992) at p. 111.
32. Ferris (2002), p. 8 is particularly apposite.
33. MacGregor (2010).
34. In Turkish 'forty' stands for 'many'. It was my colleague Güneş Işıksel who suggested having 41 or 'more than many' objects.
35. For foreign archaeologists in the later Ottoman Empire and the emergence of Ottoman archaeology and museums see Bahrani, Çelik and Eldem eds (2011).
36. Ahmed Refik (reprint 1988).
37. On Iranian booty: Faroqhi (2012). Once again: my thanks to Elif Akçetin for her comments on Chinese practice.
38. Shaw (2003), pp. 149–71.
39. Pera Museum, Istanbul (catalogue, 2011).
40. As almost all the items discussed have been previously published, often more than once, I have not included the catalogue entries forming an indispensable part of 'real' exhibition catalogues.
41. Kopytoff (1986); Geary (1986).
42. [Ca'fer Efendi], ed. by Howard Crane (1987); Murphey (2005).
43. Faroqhi (2012) based on Evliya Çelebi (2006), p. 229. The author assigned this trophy to the victorious commander in person. But as the latter died on the return journey, his officers were probably responsible.
44. Mehrendish, Ortaylı et al eds (2009), pp. 223–24.
45. Evliya Çelebi, ed. by Dankoff (1990), pp. 283–95.
46. Újváry (2007).
47. Uluç (2006), pp. 481–500.
48. For an example: Mehrendish, Ortaylı et al eds (2009), pp. 234–35.
49. Mehrendish, Ortaylı et al eds (2009). The Indian piece is sometimes on view in the chamber showing sultans' thrones (seen in the spring of 2014).
50. Mraz (1980).
51. Reindl-Kiel (2005).
52. Hanß (2013).

53. Kırılı (2006, autumn).
54. Orgun (1942).
55. Reindl-Kiel (forthcoming).
56. On Vienna: Mustafa Hattî (1999), p. 41.
57. Shifman and Walton eds (2001); Vishnevskaya (2009).
58. Reindl-Kiel (2010).
59. Borrromeo (2010).
60. Goffman (1991), pp. 140–41.
61. Erim (1991).
62. Faroqhi (forthcoming b).
63. Uluç (2006), pp. 503–05.
64. Sella (1968).
65. Artan (2011b).
66. De Vries (2008), p. 115.
67. Berg (1999); Roche (2000).
68. This episode occurs in the oratorio ‘The Seasons’ by Joseph Haydn, first performed in 1800.
69. Waley-Cohen (forthcoming).
70. Levy, Sneider and Gibney (n.d., c. 1984), p. 143 Ill. 47, p. 157, Ill.89 show shop signs from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries recommending the products on sale and, occasionally, warning customers to not haggle.
71. Lacey (2016).
72. Gerritsen and Riello (2015), at p. 113.
73. Atasoy and Raby (1989), Ill. No. 313 and 317.
74. Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello have been at the heart of several relevant collaborative projects, most notably *Global Commodities: The Material Culture of Early Modern Connections* (2016).
75. Françozo (2016).
76. Bianchi (1999); Goldgar (2002); Siebert (forthcoming).
77. Kahraman (2015b), pp. 66–67, where we find both the barber and the *paşa’s* son.
78. Smith (2016).
79. Karababa (2012).
80. This term has been inspired by the title of Şükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*.
81. The limits of this study rather resemble those chosen by Ferris (2012), pp. 8–10.
82. Pamuk (2000); Quataert (2000); İhsanoğlu ed. (2001–2); Howard (2001); İncelik, Renda eds (2003); Finkel (2006); Hanioğlu (2008); Fleet, Faroqhi and Kasaba eds (2006–13).
83. Cornette (1993). Throughout, ‘Latin Europe’ will stand for Catholic and Protestant as opposed to Orthodox Europe. While most Protestant communities spoke languages that were not Latin-based, educated men used Latin as a means of scholarly communication into the 1700s and sometimes beyond.
84. For Coptic patronage in Cairo see: Guirgis (2008).
85. Genç (1995); Çizakça (2013).
86. Schechter (2005).
87. Hanna (2011).

88. Faroqhi (1995).
89. Gerelyes ed. (2005).
90. Aynur and Karateke eds (1995).
91. Eldem (2007); I am grateful to Stefan Hanß for pointing out that inscriptions may aid the formation of communities.
92. The one and only volume in which the term ‘consumption’ forms part of the title is: Quataert ed. (2000). For further information see Göçek (1996).
93. Hamadeh (2007).
94. Establet and Pascual (1994); Grehan (2007).
95. Hanioglu (2008), p. 27.
96. Hülya Canbakal, Alp Yücel Kaya, and M. Erdem Kabadayı are currently working on these topics.
97. Peirce (2007); Zilfi (2004).
98. Animals might have been treated in the framework of a consumption study; however, in the present book, they play only a marginal role. Yet horses for instance not only served in warfare and as objects of display, but also laboured in the production of necessities: in about 1800, Istanbul’s flour came mostly from horse-driven mills, supplying the people of Istanbul with their daily bread: Aynural (2001), pp. 85–86.
99. Ferris (2012), pp. 17–19, 143–49.
100. Once again Hungarian archaeologists are in the vanguard: Vörös (2003).
101. Baram and Carroll (2000) take account of the role of capitalism in late Ottoman finds.
102. Abou-El-Haj (1983); Baram and Carroll (2000).
103. As the literature concerning these artefacts will be discussed in the body of the book, the present section does not feature annotation.
104. On the centrality of Istanbul in the official Ottoman world view: Emirlioğlu (2014), pp. 57–88.
105. Raby, Necipoğlu, Çağman and Bağcı (2000).
106. Waraich (2011).
107. Mantran (1962), pp. 303, 328.
108. In India, however, frequently illustrated stories about the love affairs of the god Krishna with a number of female cowherds (*gopas*) provided greater opportunities to show village scenes.
109. Ambraseys and Finkel (1990).
110. And (1982), p. 71.
111. Borkopp-Restle et al (2002), pp. 18–19, inventory number T1598. For basic information on these types compare Spuhler (1987), pp. 30–32.
112. Ydema (1990, reprint in 1991), pp. 123–27.
113. For reproductions of Memling paintings and surviving Memling rugs compare https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oriental_carpets_in_Renaissance_painting (accessed on 17 July 2015). For the Memling carpets dating to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Batáry (1994), pp. 96–97, Ill. No. 2–4.
114. The original having perished, we rely on copies: Ganz (1949), pp. 272–74.
115. Giovanni Garcia Fenech in <https://artstor.wordpress.com/2013/09/13/a-closer-look-at-hans-holbeins-the-ambassadors> (accessed on 17 July 2015).
116. <http://www.getty.edu/cona/CONAFullSubject.aspx?subid=700000207> (accessed on 17 July 2015).

117. The painting is now in the National Portrait Gallery, London. Compare <http://www.npg.si.edu/exhibit/britons/briton2.htm> (accessed on 27 November 2015).

CHAPTER 1 REUSING THE WORK OF PAST TIMES AND FOREIGN LANDS

1. Eyice (1994), p. 453.
2. Yürekli (2012), pp. 140–41.
3. Tezcan (2013).
4. Konyalı (1964), pp. 528–35.
5. For an example see: Konyalı (1964), pp. 736–38.
6. Uzluk ed. (1958).
7. Evliya Çelebi (2005), vol. 9, p. 247.
8. Faroqhi (1994), p. 105.
9. Bosworth (1991), p. 150.
10. Skelton (1978); Köseoğlu ed. Rogers (1987), p. 211.
11. Saner (2008).
12. Fukasawa (1987), examples reproduced on cover.
13. Kuru (2013), pp. 554–62.
14. Uluç (2006).
15. Evliya (2006), p. 229; Faroqhi (2012).
16. İrepoğlu (1999).
17. Hagen (2003), p. 184; Béller-Hann (1987); Emiralioğlu (2014), pp. 54–55.
18. Kauz (2005).
19. Crowe (1978).
20. Kawatoko (2001).
21. Ward (2001) has studied a wrecked eighteenth-century merchant ship laden with porcelain that went down near Sadana island in the Red Sea.
22. Mackie (2004).
23. Hanß (2013), at p. 50.
24. Gökbilgin (1964), pp. 219–20.
25. Boralevi, Ciampini and Contadini (2006).
26. Carboni (2007).
27. Carboni (2006), pp. 343–44.
28. Carboni (2006), p. 344.
29. Layton (1994).
30. Kurz (1975); Mraz (1980).
31. Artan (2011b).
32. Újváry (2007), pp. 18–57.
33. Bacqué-Grammont (1997).
34. Hamadeh (2007), pp. 218–37; Atasoy (2002).
35. Ünal and Raby (1986), p. 41.
36. Uluç (2006).
37. Anonymous (2015); compare www.rcac.ku.edu.tr (accessed in December 2015).
38. Ünal and Raby (1986), p. 37.
39. On Ottoman libraries in Bulgaria see Kenderova (2000), pp. 14–53; Gradeva (2008), p. 30.

40. Ünal and Raby (1986), p. 35.
41. The term 'Greater Syria' encompasses the modern states of Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Palestine.
42. Busbecq (1994), pp. 79–81; Gyllius (2000), pp. 204–06.
43. Öney (1971), p. 233, Ill. No. 58; p. 250, Ill. No. 92.
44. Erler (2010).
45. For a photograph of the Ankara centre after the fire compare: <http://fotograf-gunlukleri.blogspot.de/2013/12/1917-buyuk-ankara-yangn.html> (accessed on 6 August 2014).
46. Kadioğlu, Gökay, Mitchell (2011).
47. French (2003), p. 146.
48. Mitchell and French (2012), p. 340.
49. Öney (1971), pp. 65–66; pp. 267–69, Ill. No. 126–29. As Öney was interested in the 'Turkish period' exclusively, she does not refer to the inscription.
50. Öney (1971), p. 184.
51. Mitchell and French (2012), p. 341.
52. Atıl (1987), pp. 64–65.
53. Uzun (2001), p. 25.
54. Erdmann (1985), vol. 2, catalogue entry 3/30 following Erdmann's double article, see p. 220.
55. Ettinghausen (1932–34); Atasoy and Raby (1994), pp. 279–80; Uzun (2001), p. 23 lists panels surviving in Turkey today.
56. Evliya (2005), pp. 6–7.
57. Carswell (1982), p. 86. The name of the village being hard to read, I am sure only of the first part, namely 'kara'. But in the sixteenth century the district of Yenışehir had only two villages whose name began with 'kara': see Binark et al (1995), map on pp. 184–85. I have chosen the most likely alternative.
58. Özel (1989), p. 538.
59. Bilgi (2009), p. 434, No. 276 (SHM 17645-P694).
60. Wright (2009), pp. 156 No.112, p. 160, No. 116.
61. Faroqhi (1994), pp. 100–01.
62. For imagery see Yaşaroğlu (2001); Wright (2009), pp. 156 No.112, p. 160, No. 116. for photographs A. J. Wensinck and J. Jomier (1978), plates IX and X, following p. 120.
63. For a reproduction see Dürschmidt (2009), p. 77. On p. 154 there is an image of the Kaaba from the Yeni Cami in Istanbul, otherwise rarely seen. However, it is traversed by metal bands, perhaps because of damage prior to installation.
64. Uluç (2006).
65. Hanß (2014), at pp. 217–19.
66. Uğur, Çuhadar (1990), p. 383.
67. According to Uzunçarşılı (1981–86), p. 58, there were several apprentice weavers who had been purchased under Selim I (d. 1520). Perhaps as slaves, they could not become masters.
68. Uzunçarşılı (1981–86), pp. 24, 57, 58.
69. Erdmann (1985).
70. Tezcan ed., tr. and amplifications by Rogers (1987), p. 152.
71. The item has been published: Ölçer (1996), pp. 164–65.

72. Spuhler (2012), pp. 56–59.
73. For an example see Spuhler (2012), pp. 60–63.
74. Völker (2001), p. 54.
75. Ahmet Refik (reprint 1988b), pp. 43–44.
76. Meister, Azadi and von Saldern (1971), pp. 82 and 83.
77. www.hinduism.about.com/od/lordganesha/a/ganesha.htm (accessed 20 July 2014).
78. Reindl-Kiel (2010), p. 279.
79. Faroqhi (2008b); we have no record of African elephants ever appearing in Istanbul.
80. Atıl (1986), pp. 108–09, Ill. No. 8.
81. I thank Kaya Şahin, author of a book on Süleyman's principal chronicler Celâlzâde, for sharing his doubts with me (Şahin, 2013). Géza Dávid has kindly informed me that he knows of a single reference to an elephant present on an Ottoman campaign in Hungary; but nobody has claimed that the creature was used for executing prisoners.
82. Atıl (1986), pp. 35–77 has discussed the rather sparse information on the manner in which the paintings of the *Süleymannâme* were put together. These sources do not shed any light on the historicity of the elephant scene.
83. Fetvacı (2013) is concerned with the post-Süleymanic period.
84. Reindl-Kiel (2010), pp. 279–80.
85. Stchoukine (1966), Ill. CXI.
86. Reindl-Kiel (2010), p. 280.
87. Faroqhi (2008b), at pp. 96–99; Degirmenci (2012), pp. 214–15, Ill. No. 26.
88. Kreiser (1975), p. 186.
89. Evliya Çelebi (2006), p. 230.
90. Evliya (2006), p. 305.
91. Atıl (1999), p. 164 (Ill. No. 41).
92. Crowe (1978).
93. The most comprehensive overviews are now François (2007) and Yenişehirlioğlu (2012).
94. I am grateful to Elif Akçetin, Chinese historian specializing on the eighteenth century, for discussing this question with me.
95. Kawatoko (2001).
96. Ward (2001).
97. Faroqhi (1994), p. 170.
98. Yenişehirlioğlu (2012), p. 99.
99. Atasoy and Raby (1989), p. 285.
100. Establet and Pasqual (1998), pp. 141–62 have pointed out that the commercial activities of most pilgrims were very modest; but in the end, they 'added up': Faroqhi (2014), pp. 89–98.
101. Tomka (2003).
102. Carswell (1995), No. 159, p. 125.
103. In recent years, much work has been done on Chinese and south-east Asian porcelain sold to islands today forming part of Indonesia: <http://mingwrecks.com/publications.html> (accessed on 21 July 2015).

104. Hammerich (2001), a short biography of Prince Friedrich Josias, does not provide any information on this subject. The museum catalogue contains the following information: 'bei der Pistole V.80 findet sich im großen Katalog folgender Text: Pistole, [1 Stück des Paares 79+80], ungezogener geschnittener brauner Schaft mit in Silber im Renaissancestil gearbeiteter Garnitur, zu welcher später noch eine weitere Ausschnückung in getriebenem Silber in türkischem Geschmack kam, Lauf und Schloß im Geschmack Cellinis reich geschnitten, Stahlladestock, an Ladestock-Tülle: "66", Kaliber 17 mm, Lauflänge 42 cm, Schaftlänge 60,5 cm.'
105. Schaal (1995–96), p. 286.
106. Elgood (2009), pp. 90–103. Many Balkan arms had an Italian input, although the accidents of survival may well have exaggerated the importance of Italian manufactures.
107. Köseoğlu ed. Rogers (1987), p. 215.
108. Ágoston (2014).
109. Hanß (defended 2015), vol. 1, p. 589.
110. Kangal et al (2000); Fetvacı (2013).

Chapter 2 THE OTTOMAN SULTAN: VICTORIOUS AND PIOUS

1. Mustafa Âlî, ed. by Tietze (1979), part 1, pp. 38 and 123.
2. Evliya Çelebi (2006), p. 38.
3. Evliya Çelebi (2006), p. 38.
4. Zimmermann (1995), p. 124.
5. Fodor (reprint 2000).
6. Erdem (1996), p. 22.
7. Kastritsis (2007).
8. [Ibn Battūta] (1854), vol. 2, pp. 323–24.
9. Kafadar (1995). The working title of this book was: 'On the edge of the world of Islam'.
10. Kastritsis (2012).
11. Yérasimos (1990), pp. 202–10.
12. Necipoğlu (1991), pp. 25–30.
13. Evliya Çelebi (2006), pp. 114–22.
14. Vatin and Veinstein (1996) and eidem (2003), pp. 354–74.
15. Tezcan (2010).
16. Fetvacı (2013), pp. 59–100.
17. Necipoğlu (1991), p. 165.
18. Abou-El-Haj (1974).
19. Köseoğlu ed. Rogers (1987), p. 208.
20. Genç (1975).
21. Barkey (2008), p. 218.
22. Fleming (1999).
23. Kurz (reprint 1975).
24. Necipoğlu (Sept. 1989).
25. Necipoğlu (Sept. 1989); Rapp (2003).
26. Kurz (reprint 1975), pp. 256–58.
27. Fleischer (2009), p. 238.

28. For the accusations against Pope John XXIII at the Council of Constance (1414–18) compare Greenblatt (2012), pp. 170–71.
29. Flemming (1987); Fleischer (1992), pp. 165–66; Fleischer (2009), pp. 240–42.
30. Flemming (1987), p. 61.
31. Fleischer (2009), p. 240.
32. Fleischer (2009), p. 238. A son of Mehmed the Conqueror, Cem Sultan was a failed contender for the Ottoman throne.
33. Chong (2005). The portrait is in the National Gallery, London.
34. Raby (2000), p. 82.
35. Raby (2000), pp. 86–89.
36. Çağman (2000), p. 165.
37. Necipoğlu (2000), p. 40.
38. Necipoğlu (2000), p. 35.
39. Zimmermann (1995), pp. 159–61; Majer (1993), p. 304.
40. Majer (1993).
41. Majer (1993), p. 300.
42. Bağcı (2000), pp. 198–99.
43. Raby, Necipoğlu, Çağman and Bağcı (2000), p. 292. Venetian envoys noted that from 1520 onward, they were confronted with the sultan seated on the throne with his feet on the ground: Hanß (2014), p. 209.
44. Majer (1991), p. 376.
45. Artan (2006), pp. 411–12.
46. Raby, Necipoğlu, Çağman and Bağcı (2000), pp. 288–89.
47. Vatin and Veinstein (2003), pp. 162–67.
48. Fleischer (1986), p. 298.
49. According to Vatin and Veinstein (2003), p. 164, we cannot take it for granted that the ‘law of fratricide’ was accepted by all subjects of the sultan.
50. [Jahangir] (1999), p. 95.
51. Alam and Subrahmanyam (2007), pp. 300–03.
52. Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa (1995), p. 292.
53. Naima, ed. by İpşirli (2014), vol. 6, p. 1691. Gorton (2013, 2014), p. 175 claims that Hüseyin Ağa’s embassy to India is only recorded in ‘less reliable accounts’. The author may not have known that the texts he had consulted had drawn their information from an official chronicle.
54. For a reproduction and a valuable description containing the reference to Naima see Waraich (2011), p. 268–69.
55. Elliot (2004), p. 114.
56. I thank Tülay Artan for sharing her doubts on this issue.
57. Vatin and Veinstein (2003), pp. 96–204.
58. Tezcan (2010), pp. 227–43.
59. Baer (2008); the author has shown that the failure of 1683 permanently tarnished the image of Mehmed IV.
60. Ådahl (2007).
61. Kafadar (1994); Vatin (1995).
62. I thank Stefan Hanß for this point.
63. De Ferriol (1714).

64. For an English translation of the texts accompanying the collection of Cesare Vecellio, compare Jones and Rosenthal (2008).
65. For an introduction see Atasoy (1986).
66. Atasoy (2006), pp. 174–81.
67. Anonymous (2006), pp. 156–57; Atasoy (2006), pp. 193–94.
68. For the viewpoint of a British diplomat: Richmond (2014), pp. 49–124.
69. Aksan (2007), pp. 117–18, 18–42 and elsewhere.
70. Yaycıoğlu (2012).
71. Richmond (2014), p. 154.
72. On these portraits the principal source is Renda (2000); see also Altıntaş (2010), p. 306.
73. Renda (2000), p. 436; Altıntaş (2010), p. 306.
74. Renda (2000), pp. 428, 429, 434, 456, 472. The frequently shown portrait of Abdülhamid I is on p. 456.
75. İrepoğlu (2012b), pp. 146–47.
76. Artan (2011c).
77. Atıl (1987).
78. Kangal ed. (2000), catalogue section p. 266.
79. Fetvacı (2013), pp. 279–80. I am grateful to Christine Woodhead for her help on this issue.
80. Değirmenci (2012).
81. Mahir (2000), p. 305.
82. Faroqhi (2008).

Chapter 3 SOCIETY AND ITS DIVISIONS

1. Vatin (2002).
2. Sahillioğlu (1985b).
3. For an – admittedly exceptional – female in the register of *askeri*, see Barkan (1966), pp. 221–22.
4. Başbakanlık Arşivi Osmanlı Arşivi, Istanbul, Maliyeden Müdevver 17901, p. 6 (1028/1618–19).
5. Faroqhi (2014c). The research currently conducted by Hülya Canbakal and Hakan Erdem will shed light on changes in slave ownership.
6. İnalçık (1973), p. 114.
7. Kunt (1983) remains the most detailed study of this transformation.
8. Kunt (1975).
9. Lier (2004), pp. 84–88.
10. Klein (2007).
11. Aynur (2006), pp. 514–17.
12. Renda (1993).
13. Anonymous (1998).
14. Alpaslan Arça (2013).
15. Görünür (2010); İrepoğlu (1999), pp. 168–205.
16. Scarce (2003), p. 45: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi R 989, fol. 93a.
17. Jones and Rosenthal (2008); Mukerji (2013) is concerned with the moral implications that Nicolas de Nicolay thought he could discern in Ottoman costume, and not with the actual depictions.
18. For an important monograph see İslamoğlu (1994).

19. Aynural (2001), pp. 7–8.
20. Regrettably, apart from Turkish, I cannot read the relevant Balkan languages.
21. Galland (2002), p. 117. For an image of what may have been a fictional ‘peasant’ forming part of a sultanic parade see Atıl (1999), p. 182, upper right hand side.
22. Hanna (1991); Establet and Pascal (1994, 1998, 2005, 2011), Karababa (2012).
23. Sahillioğlu (1985b); Seng (1996) and (1999).
24. Schildbacher (1983); Heberer (reprint 1967); Wild (reprint 1966). Schildbacher was a petty nobleman, Heberer a multilingual teacher and secretary, and only Wild was a simple soldier.
25. Dávid and Fodor (2007).
26. Ottoman sources say ‘Rus’; perhaps a few Russians were mixed in as well, but normally Ottoman sources called the latter: Moskof. I thank Victor Ostapchuk for this information.
27. Toledano (2007) and the earlier works of this author on the same subject, Erdem (1996), Zilfi (2010).
28. [Saz] (reprint 1995), pp. 76–80.
29. Osman Ağa (1962).
30. For a publication of the series see İrepoğlu (1999).
31. İrepoğlu (2004), p. 178.
32. Sint Nicolaas, Renda, İrepoğlu and Bull (2004).
33. İrepoğlu (2004), p. 82.
34. Hostetler (2005), pp. li–lxi. My thanks to Elif Akçetin for pointing out this reference.
35. Chakraverty (2008), no page numbers: ‘Chiteri or the lady painter...’, the original, dated to about 1630, is in Bharat Kala Bhavan Museum, Banaras Hindu University Campus, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh 221005, India.
36. İrepoğlu (2004), pp. 73–74. Atbaş (2008).
37. Compare for example the image described as ‘Youth reading’ by Rıza-yi Abbasi made in Isfahan around 1625 (Canby 2009, pp. 52–53).
38. İrepoğlu (1999), pp. xlv–lx.
39. Bağcı, Çağman, Renda, Tanındı (2006).
40. İrepoğlu (2004), p. 82.
41. İrepoğlu (2004), p. 83.
42. İrepoğlu (2004), p. 180.
43. Zilfi (2004), p. 133.
44. İrepoğlu (2004), p. 178.
45. Artan (2006), pp. 473–74.
46. Hinz (1955), pp. 21–22.
47. Evliya Çelebi (2006), pp. 53, 301.
48. Evliya Çelebi (2006), p. 296.
49. Barkan ed. (1942), Kütükoğlu (1978), Kütükoğlu (1983), the latter register dated to 1640.
50. <http://www.diyadinnet.com/YararlıBilgiler-1071&Bilgi=osmanlı-ölçü-birimler> (accessed on 11 October 2014). But other internet sites give slightly different equivalents. The proverb ‘Nereye gitsen okka dört yüz dirhem’

has been recorded by Ömer Asım Aksoy: Aksoy (reprint 1995). I have accessed this publication through: http://tr.wiktionary.org/wiki/Nereye_gitsen_okka_d%C3%B6rt_y%C3%BCz_dirhem (also on 11 October 2014).

51. For *dirhems* from the Suna-İhsan Kırac collection see Kürkman (2003), pp. 233–35, they were all in use between 1500 and 1550.
52. <http://www.diyadinnet.com/YararliBilgiler-1071&Bilgi=osmanl%C4%B1-%C3%B6l%C3%A7%C3%BC-birimleri> (accessed on 11 October 2014).
53. İnalçık (1973), p. 111.
54. See the title of Stoianovich (1960).
55. For biographical data compare <http://www.von-stackelberg.de/personen/otto-magnus-archaeologe.htm> (accessed on 9 October 2014).
56. Berlin: Reimer, 1831. There is also a French edition: *La Grèce: Vues pittoresques et topographiques* (Greece: picturesque and topographic views) (Paris: D'Ostervald, 1830–34).
57. I thank Anna Vlachopoulou and Albrecht Berger, both of Munich University, for information provided and also for their reference to the entry in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*: *πριμικήριος*, Lat. *primicerius*, ‘the one whose name stands first on the wax tablets’, ‘the senior member of any group’. Marinos Sariyannis (Foundation for Research and Technology, Rethymno, Crete) has also been very helpful. For the Ottoman meaning of *pirimikür* see Yılmaz (2010), p. 530.
58. Nógrády (2007), pp. 29–30.
59. Ricci (2002), pp. 145–46 concerning Ferrara; here returnees often dedicated their chains in a chapel of St Leonhard, the protector of captives. For an example from the Holy Roman Empire, see Hanß (2015), vol.1, p. 612f.
60. Vatin (2002).
61. I owe this consideration to Stefan Hanß.
62. Seng (1996) and Seng (1999).
63. Faroqhi (2014).
64. For some examples see Faroqhi (1984), p. 57.

Chapter 4 A WORLD OF THREE RELIGIONS: OTTOMAN CONQUESTS AND THE NON-MUSLIM POPULATION

1. Kastritis (2007), *passim*.
2. Gökbilgin (1957, reprint 2008), p. 29.
3. Barkan ed. (1942).
4. Barkan (1949–50). This map has been glued into the *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, XI; there is no pagination.
5. İnalçık (1973), p. 114.
6. Lowry (2002), pp. 43–44.
7. İnalçık (1980).
8. Genç (1975).
9. Çizakça (1996), pp. 164–87.
10. Vlachopoulou (2013).

11. Heyberger (2008).
12. Fotopoulos and Delivorrias (1997), pp. 408–13.
13. The wording is by Paul Rycaut, cited in Kuban (1995), p. 232.
14. Gonella (2008); Heyberger (2008).
15. Ergenç (2013), p. 76.
16. Rozen (1998).
17. Bardakçı (2013), pp. 44–50, 56–59.
18. Çizakça (2013), p. 271.
19. Baer (2008); Şişman (2008).
20. Kiel (1984).
21. For photographs showing the exterior and interior of the church see <http://www.sacred-destinations.com/greece/meteora-great-meteoron-monastery> (accessed on 25 January 2015).
22. Karaca (2008).
23. Gradeva (2008b).
24. Klein, Ousterhout, Pitarakis (2011), p. 20.
25. For a colour photograph and description of this panel see: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O106609/tile-unknown/> (accessed on 16 November 2014).
26. Evliya Çelebi (2006), pp. 149, 217.
27. Tietze and Yahalom (1995).
28. Sabev (2006), pp. 299–300.
29. Beydilli (1984).
30. Hering (1968), pp. 161–76.
31. Petrovsky (2014), pp. 65, 100–01.
32. On the latter category, see Layton (1994).
33. Petrovsky (2014), pp. 62–67.
34. Petrovsky (2014), pp. 208–225.
35. Petrovsky (2014), pp. 96–97.
36. Cantemir tr. by Tindal (1734).
37. Nu'mân Efendi, Ebû Sehl ed. Savaş (1999).
38. Şânî-zâde ed. Yilmazer (2008), vol. 1, pp. 1–liii.
39. Berkes (1971), pp. 996.
40. Dursteler (2011), pp. 1–33.
41. Hagen (2003), pp. 277–79.
42. Krstić (2011), pp. 121–34 and the literature cited therein.
43. Develi ed. (1998), p. 41 and elsewhere.
44. Petrovsky (2014), pp. 158–63.
45. Tribe (2004).
46. Baer (2008), pp. 132–38; for a comprehensive biography see Camariano (1970).
47. Philliou (2011), pp. 69–74.
48. Philliou (2011), p. 83.
49. Faroghi (2008).
50. See Çağman (2014), pp. 108–09 for a garden in springtime.
51. Fleischer (1986), p. 158.
52. Ebusuud, ed. by Düzdağ (1972), p. 109, no. 482. However, Ebu's-Su'ud did not countenance the enslavement of Iranian children. Without indicating his sources, Dernschwam (1923, reprint 1986), p. 89 recorded

that until the campaign of 1553–54, the Ottomans had not enslaved their Iranian captives. However, at this time, the mufti had supposedly declared that the sale of Iranian prisoners was permitted. *La question reste ouverte*.

53. Köhbach (1989) consulted through: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/amasya-peace> (accessed on 16 November 2014).
54. Evliya (2001), p. 184.
55. Evliya (2001), p. 281.
56. On the Ottoman occupation see Blair (1998) and Zarinebaf Shahr (1991).
57. Stoianovich (1960).
58. Pitarakis and Merantzas (2006), pp. 22–35.
59. *Ibid.*, pp. 107–12.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 86–88.
62. For a detailed description see *Ibid.*, pp. 127–28. Today the paten is in the Sadberk Hanım Museum in Istanbul. I am most grateful to Dr Marinos Sariyannis, Foundation for Research and Technology, Institute for Mediterranean Studies, Rethymno, Crete, who has read and translated the inscriptions on this plate. He has also provided a link to a site on which there is a photograph of the Bursa church, probably taken about a century ago: <https://mikrasiatwn.wordpress.com/2014/07/25/ιερές-μητροπόλεις-της-μικράς-ασίας/> (accessed on 20 November 2014). Marinos Sariyannis has also identified St Prochoros as the helper of St John, found the homepage of the monastery of St John on Patmos and translated the relevant statements: <http://www.patmosmonastery.gr/proxoros.html> (accessed on 20 November 2014).
63. Pitarakis and Merantzas (2006), p. 127.
64. Bilgi and Zambak (2012), p. 156 have provided a full description.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 156. Dr Talin Suciyan (Munich) informs me that ‘third’ is the better reading; I am most grateful for her help.
66. *Ibid.*, pp. 146–55.
67. Marchese, Breu and the Armenian Patriarchate (2010), pp. 84–85.
68. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Develi> (accessed on 19 December 2014).
69. Kuban (1995), p. 232.
70. Marchese, Breu and the Armenian Patriarchate (2010), p. 75.
71. De Nicolay (1989); Vecellio (2008); Brafman (2009).
72. For the illustrations contained in Nicolas de Nicolay see gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b20000337 (accessed on 18 December 2014).
73. De la Chappelle (1648) in <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8612086z> (accessed on 17 December 2014). I am most grateful to Dr Irvin Cemil Schick, owner of the image of the Jewish woman by George de la Chappelle, which he has kindly allowed me to reproduce.
74. Moréri (1732), vol. 4, p. 442; Madame de Sévigné (1820), vol. 2, pp. 13, 308 http://books.google.com.tr/books/about/Le_grand_dictionnaire_historique.html?id=n60-AAAcAAJ&redir_esc=y (consulted on 19 December 2014) and <https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=PYsOAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA13&lpg=PA13&dq=sevigne+gillonne+d%27harcourt&source=bl&ots=>

- u17QRrVNRy&sig = 6dLtVQXMRQ43uvrrRau3PiqfFEg&hl = en&sa = X&ei = RSWUVPrqLo3BPLfHgLAe&ved = 0CB0Q6AEwAAv = onepage&q = sevigne%20gillonne%20d%27harcourt&f = false (accessed on 19 December 2014).
75. De la Chappelle (1648), dedication pages not numbered.
 76. My thanks to Nicolas Vatin for this information!
 77. This information comes from the description of a Chalkokondyles translation into French, published in Paris by Mathieu Guillemot in 1632 and offered for sale by AbeBooks.com: <http://www.abebooks.com/Lhistoire-decadence-lempire-grec-Chalkokondyles-Laonikos/11801165547/bd> (accessed on 19 December 2014).
 78. Ferriol, M. de (reprint 1979).
 79. Published in Sievernich ed. (1989), inset following p. 240.
 80. Juhasz (1990), p. 126, with the following caption: “Jewish Woman” late 18th century. From Costume Album Mss. 1974-6-17-012 f. 31, The British Museum.’
 81. Görünür (2014), p. 17.
 82. In the early 1800s, yellow shoes had come to be the privilege of elite Muslims; this colour was now forbidden both to non-elite Muslims and to Christians or Jews: Elliot (1994), p. 105.
 83. Denny (2006), pp. 182–83 (illustration of carpet included; catalogue No. 82). See also the explanations of Roberta Marin and (probably) Wendy Thompson in Carboni ed. (2006), p. 324.
 84. Mann ed. (1989), p. 275. The Textile Museum in Washington, recently affiliated with George Washington University, shows the following item on the internet: ‘Parokhet (Torah Curtain) Cairo, Egypt. Ottoman Empire Early 17th century. Wool, knotted pile. TM R16.4.4 Acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1915’ <http://museum.gwu.edu/oriental-rugs> (accessed on 20 December 2014).
 85. Mann ed. (1989), p. 275.

Chapter 5 MAKING WAR AND PEACE: FIGHTING, GIFT-GIVING AND THE DELINEATION OF BORDERS

1. Murphey (1999), pp. 191–92.
2. Veinstein (1997), p. 386.
3. Niederkorn (1993), pp. 19–20.
4. Gülsoy (2004); Greene (2000).
5. Kołodziejczyk (2000), pp. 147–48; İnbaşı (2004).
6. Matthee (2012), pp. 215–41.
7. Sümer (1988), p. 18.
8. İnalçık (1973), p. 111.
9. Dávid (2013), p. 289.
10. İnalçık (1973), p. 114.
11. Fleischer (1986), p. 156.
12. Gökbilgin (1957), p. 52.
13. İnalçık (1973), p. 78.
14. Barkan (1972–79), vol. 1, pp. 108–31.

15. Yi (2005), pp. 134–37.
16. Wilkins (2010), pp. 118–25.
17. Faroqhi (1991), p. 234.
18. Wilkins (2010), p. 30.
19. İnalçık (1980).
20. Akdağ (1975), pp. 420–21; Barkey (1994), p. 200.
21. Güçer (1964), pp. 1–37.
22. Veinstein (1988).
23. İnalçık (1974).
24. Ágoston (2005), pp. 96–127.
25. Ágoston (2005), pp. 196–97.
26. Sinan, ed. by Crane and Akin, p. 116.
27. Beydilli and Erünsal (2001–02), p. 23.
28. Dávid and Fodor (2002), p. 320.
29. Panzac (2005), pp. 120–24.
30. Evliyâ Tchélébi (2000), pp. 173–91.
31. Aziz Efendi, ed. by Rhoads Murphey (1985), p. 12.
32. Gerelyes and Kovács (2003), *passim*.
33. Zimmermann (1995), p. 124.
34. Faroqhi (2008), p. 174.
35. Abou-El-Haj (1974).
36. Murphey (2005).
37. For a remarkable soldiers' song encouraging the sultan to go to war against the Habsburgs after Karlowitz, see Zarinebaf (2010), pp. 183–86.
38. Mustafa Sâfi (2003), vol. 2, p. 255.
39. Şehdî Osman, ed. by Unat (1941–42).
40. Beaufort-Spontin and Pfaffenbichler (2013), pp. 120–21 (No. 35); pp. 149–50 (No. 49); pp. 194–95 (No. 70); pp. 212–13 (No. 79); pp. 232–33 (No. 89).
41. For a rare exception see Murphey (1980).
42. Schuckelt (2010).
43. Schuckelt (2010), p. 32.
44. Petrasch et al, pp. 26–35 explains that many items shown in Karlsruhe came not from Margrave Ludwig Wilhelm who had founded the collection, but from his friends and relatives.
45. Schuckelt (2010), p. 74; Petrasch et al, p. 94.
46. A photograph is on the website of the museum: <http://www.pbase.com/dosseman/image/148387224> (accessed on 5 July 2014).
47. Petrasch et al, pp. 89–90.
48. Roxburgh (2005), pp. 338 and 457. The helmet has the number: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, İstanbul, 2/1192.
49. Rogers and Ward (1988), pp. 12, 150, 151. Also located in the palace museum, its number is TKS 2/1187.
50. Wright (2009), p. 56; for a similar decoration see p. 59. In the latter picture, the unbelievers opposing the Prophet have been given helmets that somewhat recall those current in contemporary Latinate Europe. Ottoman warriors with plumes on their helmets might appear in contemporary battle scenes as well: Bernus-Taylor et al (1990), p. 95.

51. <http://www.schlossambras-innsbruck.at/besuchen/sammlungen/die-kunst-und-wunderkammer/> (accessed on 13 March 2014).
52. Veinstein (1997).
53. Bernus-Taylor et al (1990), p. 79.
54. Luckner (1958), pp. 68 and 126. I thank Stefan Krause for this reference.
55. TKS Istanbul 2/1192.
56. Rogers and Ward (1988), pp. 130–31 (TKS 2/3825); see also Bernus-Taylor et al (1990), pp. 212–13.
57. Tülay Artan is preparing an edition of this register.
58. Bernus-Taylor (1990), p. 253.
59. Petrasch et al (1991), pp. 295–98.
60. Beaufort-Spontin and Pfaffenbichler (2013), pp. 194–95 (No. 70).
61. Atasoy (1997).
62. Beaufort-Spontin and Pfaffenbichler (2013), pp. 194–95, No. 70.
63. Roxburgh (2005), pp. 365 and 466, where there is an instructive description by Zeren Tanındı.
64. Bernus-Taylor (1990), p. 83 (TKS Istanbul 2/1192).
65. Atasoy and Uluç (2012), p. 66.
66. Schuckelt (2010), p. 133.
67. Petrasch et al (1991), pp. 208–11.
68. Petrasch et al (1991), p. 209.
69. Schuckelt (2010), pp. 102–03, 122. Some *bozdoğans* also were of Transylvanian manufacture.
70. Hochedlinger (2003), p. 163.
71. Çoruhlu (2012).
72. Orgun (1941).
73. Ibid.
74. Von Folsach (1996), p. 202.
75. Karl (2011).
76. I do not know what Safavid commanders or Nādir Shah did with captured Ottoman *tugş*.
77. Onuk (1998) has catalogued the items that she was able to view, with special attention to the state of preservation. However, she could not see those tents that were in storage at the time. See also Atasoy (2000).
78. Reindl-Kiel (2014).
79. For instance: Atıl (1999), pp. 160–61 (No. 43).
80. Doğru (2006), pp. 52–53.
81. Onuk (1998), pp. 41–44; Atasoy (2000), p. 51.
82. Artan (2011).
83. Glaser et al (1976), vol. 2, p. 52.
84. For colour reproductions, which also show damages, see Onuk (1998).
85. For a colour photograph see Glaser et al (1976), vol. 2, pp. 52–53, No. 104 (inventory number A 1854).
86. An older but still valuable study is Stoye (reprint 2000).
87. Zülfikâr Paşa (2007a and b). The text has been edited by two authors working independently.
88. For a biography see Stoye (1994). This personage spelt his name as ‘Marsigli’, but present-day Italian authors write ‘Marsili’.
89. Magnani (2012).

90. Magnani (2012), p. 82, Hezarfenn's work has been edited by İlgürel (1998).
91. McGowan (1987) has called this region the 'middle Danube cul-de-sac'.
92. Glaser et al (1976), vol. 2, p. 78.
93. Lodovisi (2012), p. 168.
94. Ibid., p. 172.
95. Abou-El-Haj (1974).
96. Pedani (2002), pp. 40–46.
97. The growing importance of this trade has long been known: Stoianovich (1960).
98. Osman Ağa (1954), pp. 148–55.
99. They have all been published as part of Lodovisi (2005) and (2012).
100. Lodovisi (2005), p. 107 has expressed this uncertainty.
101. The image is in Lodovisi (2012), p. 169 and an enlargement is on p. 166. Supposedly there was also a scene of mutual embracing at the end of the proceedings, this time involving Ruzzini as well, but the reproduction is too small to be indicative.
102. Nu'mân Efendi (1972), pp. 122–35; Nu'mân Efendi (1999), pp. 104–110.
103. On the use of *hüccets* issued by a qadi see Pedani (2002), p. 44.
104. Nu'mân Efendi (1972), p. 157; Nu'mân Efendi (1999), p. 120.
105. Pedani (2002), p. 55.
106. Nu'mân Efendi (1972), pp. 110–12; Nu'mân Efendi (1999), pp. 97–98.
107. Lodovisi (2012), p. 172.
108. Pedani (2002), pp. 52–57. For an explanation of the term *hunka* see Nu'mân Efendi (1972), p. 217.
109. Nu'mân Efendi (1972), p. 132; Nu'mân Efendi (1999), p. 108.
110. Stoye (1994), pp. 179–81 assigns much of the credit to Marsili's assistant Johann Christian Müller.
111. Lodovisi (2012), p. 168.
112. Nu'mân Efendi (1972), pp. 78–81; Nu'mân Efendi (1999), pp. 82–86.
113. Brotton (2013), p. 13.
114. Osman Ağa (1954), pp. 33–34. For an overview over the topic see Dávid and Fodor (2007).
115. Lodovisi (2012), pp. 170–71.
116. Stoye (1994), pp. 195–97 emphasizes that Marsili's grasp of economic problems was mostly limited to routes and communications.
117. Von Folsach (1996), p. 421.

Chapter 6 EATING AND DRINKING, MOSTLY FROM PRECIOUS OBJECTS

1. For two examples see Arsel ed. (1996) and Bilgin and Samancı eds (2008).
2. A recent example: Hatzaki, Nessi, Pamuk eds (2014).
3. Tezcan (1998), p. 3; Kut (reprint 2010a). The surviving manuscript describes both princes as deceased. It is part of a seventeenth-century miscellany, whose author remains unknown; thus we do not know why he considered the circumcision records worth transcribing.
4. I thank Özge Samancı for emphasizing this point.
5. Faroqhi (1984), p. 92.

6. Bilgin and Samancı eds (2008), p. 367; White (2011), p. 117.
7. Bilgin and Samancı eds (2008), p. 327.
8. Stoianovich (1966).
9. Redhouse (1890, reprint in 1921), p. 1380.
10. Işın (2012).
11. Evliya (2007), p. 270; Evliya (2005), p. 194; Yerasimos (2011), p. 367.
12. Bilgin (2004).
13. Faroqhi (2014).
14. Artan (2000).
15. Nizri (2012).
16. Tezcan (1998); Kut (reprint 2010a), pp. 158–59.
17. Atıl (1999), pp. 220–21. For high dignitaries eating in groups of two or three, compare pp. 228–29. The monarch always ate from a separate tray, although the account of Princes Bayezid and Cihangir's circumcision mentions a banquet of the Sultan with the *paşas* and lords (*beyler*). See Kut (2010a), p. 159.
18. Bilgin (2006), pp. 145–75.
19. De Planhol (1995), pp. 102–03.
20. Evliya (2005), p. 44.
21. Bilgin (2006), pp. 168–71; Gözcü and Akçiçek (2012).
22. Faroqhi (1986b).
23. Bilgin (2004), pp. 196–97. However, stuffed mussels (*midye dolması*) have been ubiquitous on the streets of Istanbul throughout the later twentieth century; and they occur in a famous cookbook, first published in 1844. Thus this seafood probably was popular already in the early 1800s: Saruhanoğlu (2012).
24. Hanß (2014), pp. 209–16. I thank the author for making me aware of this point.
25. Reindl-Kiel (2003), p. 81. In today's Turkey, red meat is far more expensive than chicken.
26. Faroqhi (2014).
27. Samancı (2003), pp. 170–71.
28. Vörös (2003), pp. 359–60.
29. This image appears on the cover of Ergin, Neumann and Singer eds (2007). See also Singer (2011), pp. 69–71.
30. Barkan (1963).
31. Orbay (2007).
32. Money payments might be contingent upon the foundation's making some profit. Certain assignees wound up with documents promising money that never materialized, as happened to the famous poet Fuzuli: İnalçık (reprint 2005), pp. 57–59.
33. Singer (2002), p. 115.
34. Faroqhi (2007a).
35. Singer (2012).
36. Kut (reprint 2010a), pp. 158 and 163.
37. İnalçık (1982).
38. Singer (2012), p. 183.
39. Kafadar (1989); Kut (1996).
40. Faroqhi (2007b).

41. Kut (reprint 2010b).
42. Kut (reprint 2010b), p. 212.
43. Hattox (1985).
44. Faroqhi (1986b).
45. Zilfi (1986).
46. Evliya (1999), pp. 18–19.
47. Deguilhem (2008), p. 932.
48. Kâtib Chelebi (1957), pp. 56–58.
49. Raymond (1973–74), vol. 1, p. 144–51.
50. Genç (2001).
51. Çaksu (2007); Mikhail (2007).
52. Carswell (1995), No. 62, p. 65 (inventory number HK187-3250).
53. Kürkman (2005), pp. 229–41. Kürkman does accept the notion that a certain image bearing two Armenian names has been signed by the makers, rather than by the traders (p. 241).
54. Kürkman (2005), pp. 80–84.
55. Sint Nicolaas, Renda, İrepoğlu and Bull (2004), pp. 64–65.
56. Dağtaş (2007), p. 45; Martini (1998), pp. 112–13 (No. 50).
57. Dağtaş (2007), p. 71.
58. Aynural (2001), p. 88.
59. Evliya Çelebi (2007), p. 195.
60. Aynural (2001), pp. 147–50.
61. Aynural (2001), pp. 122–26.
62. Yerasimos (2011), pp. 349–50.
63. Busbecq (1994), p. 33.
64. Evliya (2000), p. 398.
65. Greenwood (1999).
66. Yerasimos (2011), p. 410; Evliya (2001), p. 101.
67. Faroqhi (2001).
68. Yerasimos (2011), p. 447.
69. Bağcı, Çağman, Renda and Tanındı (2006), pp. 146–47.
70. Crowe (1978).
71. Atasoy and Raby (1989), p. 224.
72. Üçok ed. (2000), p. 137, No. 12.
73. Atıl (1999), p. 202, No. 22.
74. And (2007), p. 132.
75. Işın (2013), pp. 6–7, 22.
76. Yerasimos (2011), pp. 541. The numerous indexes in this book have for the first time provided scholars with the opportunity to analyse Evliya's record of Ottoman food culture.
77. Busbecq (1994), p. 93.
78. Yerasimos (2011), pp. 538–42.
79. For an example see Bağcı, Çağman, Renda and Tanındı (2006), p. 205.
80. For example Atasoy and Raby (1989), No. 317 (no pagination).
81. Gerelyes (2009), p. 387.
82. Oral communication from Juanita Vroom, for which I am most grateful.
83. Gerelyes (2009), p. 392.
84. Ostapchuk and Bilyayeva (2009), pp. 164–65.
85. Vroom (2003), pp. 299–300.

86. I was able to see these in the storehouse of the Athenian Agora excavation and thank Prof. Jack Davis, then director of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, for showing them to me.
87. Korre-Zographou (2012), pp. 12, 38.
88. Ostapchuk and Bilyayeva (2009), p. 166.
89. Finkel (2009), p. 548; Carroll (2000), pp. 171–74.
90. Carswell (2007), pp. 95–97.
91. Atıl (1999), pp. 172–73 (No. 37).
92. Nesin (2006, first edition 1966), pp. 153–55.
93. Yerasimos (2011), p. 402.
94. Auer, Rauch, Seidl (2009), pp. 50–54.
95. Yerasimos (2011), pp. 336–37.
96. Evliya (2005), p. 487.
97. Vroom (2007), p. 89.
98. Auer, Rauch and Seidl (2009), pp. 44–49.
99. Arif Bilgin is currently working on a comprehensive study of these importations.
100. Yerasimos (2011), p. 167.
101. Ibid., p. 432, Evliya (2005), p. 211.
102. Evliya (2007), pp. 242, 268.
103. Yerasimos (2011), pp. 378–80. By contrast, today standardization is an important feature, as for instance factory-produced halva is available in many Turkish cities.

Chapter 7 PILES AND PILES OF TEXTILES AND LEATHERS

1. Shifman and Walton eds (2001); Atasoy and Uluç (2012).
2. Ölçer et al (2014), pp. 331–33.
3. For numerous examples, see Gagarina, Ortaylı et al (2010).
4. Raymond (1973–74), vol. 1, p. 135; İnalçık (1979–80).
5. See Görünür (2010), pp. 37 and 64–65 for an *entari* probably made from Iranian fabric.
6. Dürri Ahmed Efendi in vol. 5 of Raşid (1865–66), pp. 372–98.
7. İrepoğlu (1999), p. 192.
8. For Damascus just before 1700, see Establet and Pascal (2005) and iidem (2011).
9. Doğanalp-Votzi (1997), pp. 69–77; Kütükoğlu (1983), pp. 186–87.
10. Elliot (2004).
11. Quataert (1997).
12. İrepoğlu (1999), pp. 168–205.
13. Zilfi (2004).
14. On early modern Bologna: Muzzarelli (1999), pp. 268–87.
15. Busbecq (1994), pp. 90–91.
16. Bağcı (1996).
17. Busbecq (1994), pp. 90–91.
18. Paris (1957), p. 546; Davis (1967), p. 122. I thank Amanda Phillips for bringing Davis's text to my attention.
19. Establet and Pascual (2005), pp. 112–13.
20. Canbakal (2005).

21. Peters (1985), pp. 484–89, 525–27.
22. Turna (2015).
23. Pedani Fabris (2008); Veinstein (2008).
24. Todorov (1967–68).
25. Faroqhi (1979).
26. İnalçık (1996), pp. 121–32.
27. Faroqhi (reprint 1995), p. 194.
28. [Ibn Battūta] (1854), vol. 2, pp. 270–71.
29. Barnes (1997), referring to the fragments, now more or less reliably dated, from excavations in Old Cairo.
30. İnalçık (1979–80).
31. İnalçık (1970), p. 215.
32. Karal (2nd edn 1988), p. 136. I am grateful to Betül Başaran for supplying this reference in a hurry.
33. Fukasawa (1987).
34. Atasoy et al (2001).
35. Mehrendish, Ortaylı et al (2009), pp. 172–75.
36. The major study on this issue is Atasoy and Uluç (2012).
37. Kafadar (1986), pp. 213–28.
38. Phillips (2014), 151–57.
39. Evliya (2005), p. 248.
40. Establet and Pasqual (2005), pp. 318, 332, 334, 351, 352.
41. Kütükoğlu (1983), pp. 178–79.
42. Evliya Çelebi (2005), pp. 23, 140.
43. Thévenot ed. Yérasimos (1980), p.232.
44. Curatola (2004). I owe this reference to Amanda Phillips and Stefan Hanß.
45. Ricci (2002), pp. 27–28.
46. For examples of cushion covers visible on the internet see Phillips (2012b).
47. Tezcan and Okimura eds (2007), pp. 166–77.
48. Hammer[-Purgstall] (1818), pp. vii–viii, 69–70.
49. Barkan ed. (1942), section I, pp. 332 and 334–35.
50. Barkan ed. (1942), p. 332.
51. This also applies to the shoes in the collection of the Sadberk Hanım Museum: Görünür (2014).
52. For some examples compare Şahin et al (2010), pp. 214–20.
53. Dağtaş (2007), pp. 46–47.
54. Ölçer et al (2014), p. 153.
55. Gagarina, Raby et al (2009), pp. 84–91.
56. Exhibition catalogue Smithsonian (2009), pp. 66–67, 84–87.
57. Arıkan (1991).
58. Papakostantinou (2008), pp. 136–38.
59. The fundamental work on turbans is İşli (2009); compare especially the drawings on pp. 14, 15, 30. However, the Turkish original is much superior to the English translation.
60. İşli (2009), pp. 61, 74, 81, 200, 215.
61. İşli (2009), p. 69.
62. See İşli (2009), p. 65 for a stone which may once have shown some colour.
63. Atasoy (1986), p. 14; on pp. 24–29 there is a conspectus of the costume albums known to date; for Levni's costume figures see İrepoğlu (1999).

64. For a dramatic example compare the portrait of Süleyman the Magnificent dated to about 1539 and attributed to Titian or his school in the Kunsthistorisches Museum (Vienna): http://www.kingsacademy.com/mhodes/11_Western-Art/14_Italian-High-Renaissance/Titian/Titian.htm (accessed on 27 March 2014).
65. Tezcan, Okumura (2007), pp. 170–71, No. 56.
66. Atıl (1986), pp. 214–15 shows the reception of Süleyman's ambassador at the Iranian court. The Iranian caps are taller and thinner than those worn by the Ottoman envoy.
67. Adahl (2006), p. 223, No. 40 (*nakibü'l-eşraf*).
68. Atasoy (1986), No. 8.
69. İşli (2009), p. 55.
70. Mélikoff (1975).
71. Zilfi (2004).
72. İrepoğlu (1999), pp. 178–79.
73. Fenerci Mehmed ed. Atasoy (1986), ill. no. 95.
74. Zilfi (2004), pp. 129–30.
75. Görünür (2010), pp. 15–16. This volume also contains a very helpful glossary of textile terms (pp. 291–300), which gives the meanings of Ottoman words both in Modern Turkish and in English.
76. Faroqhi (2004), p. 86. These stories have been recorded under the heading '*gönlek*' of Anonymous (1963–77), vol. III (*E-İ*), pp. 1756–60.
77. Reproduced in Görünür (2010), p. 16.
78. Fenerci Mehmed, ed. by Atasoy (1986), ill. no. 23 and 24.
79. *Ibid.*, ill. no. 95.
80. Montagu (1993). p. 107.
81. Ölçer et al (2014), p. 334.
82. For examples see Görünür (2010), pp. 15–19.
83. Görünür (2010), pp. 60–61; Atasoy and Uluç (2012), pp. 38 and 41.
84. Kanitz (1875–79), vol. 2, pp. 126–27.
85. Görünür (2010), pp. 64–65, No. 3.
86. Alpaslan Arça (2013), p. 78.
87. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
88. Hanß (defended in 2015), vol. 1, pp. 502–11 has discussed a caftan today in Madrid, which had belonged to the admiral commanding the Ottoman fleet at Lepanto. I thank the author for this reference.
89. Tezcan (2006), p. 226.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 227.
91. Reproduction in *Ibid.*, p. 112: Atasoy and Uluç (2012), p. 38.
92. Tezcan (2006), p. 230.
93. *Ibid.*, p. 227.
94. Ölçer et al (2010), pp. 322–23. However, another version of this image, in the Minto Album kept in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, does not show this detail: Wright (2008), p. 341.
95. Komaroff (2011), pp. 268–69.
96. Dağtaş (2007), p. 62.
97. <http://www.kunstsammlungen-coburg.de/sammlungen-historische-raeume-tuerkenbeute.php> (accessed on 7 May 2014).
98. Gerelyes (2001).

99. For a further publication see Dağtaş (2007), p. 86.
100. Tezcan (2004), p. 75.
101. Dağtaş (2007), p. 44; Kal'a (2012), p. 90.
102. Barkan ed. (1942), section I, pp. 332–34.
103. Ibid., section II, p. 34.
104. 'Ḥarīr, introductory section' (1971).
105. Atasoy, Denny, Mackee and Tezcan (2001), No. 92 is but one example among very many.
106. Allsen (2002).
107. Allgrove McDowell (1989).
108. Ölçer (2014), p. 147, No. 45.
109. Biedrońska Slotowa (2014), p. 88.
110. Mack (2002), p. 46.
111. Ölçer et al (2014), p. 143.
112. Fotopoulos and Delivorrias (1997), p. 307, No. 496 – and other illustrations.
113. Vishnevskaya (2009), p. 12. Possibly the eagle of St John is missing because the strip of cloth available to the tailors was quite narrow.
114. Gagarina, Ortaylı et al (2010), pp. 32–34, 224–25.
115. On Nikopoia see <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Madonna-religious-art> (accessed 27 November 2015).
116. Vishnevskaya (2009), p. 12.
117. Noever (2009), pp. 216–17.
118. Mack (1998).
119. For a reproduction see <http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/full.php?ID=154231> (accessed 27 November 2015).
120. Reyhanlı (1983), p. 121, colour ill. No. 100. The miniature is part of Nakkaş Hasan's 'Eğri Fetihnamesi', Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, Hazine 1609.
121. Faruqi (reprint 1987).
122. Curatola (2004).
123. Mack (1998), p. 65.
124. Zilfi (2004), p. 140.
125. Today the finds are in the Musée de Cluny, Paris.
126. The Budapest History Museum/Castle Museum exhibits finds from these excavations. In his discussion of relatively recent finds Zoltán Bencze only records architectural remains and ceramics; Bencze (2003).
127. <http://www.cairo360.com/article/artsandculture/1264/the-egyptian-textile-museum-history-of-egypt-through-fabrics> (accessed 26 April 2014). However, for one reason or another, this fairly full description of the Museum's holdings stops with the end of the Mamlūk period, apart from a *kisve* (covering of the Kaaba) from Ottoman times. However, in reality, the Museum does possess an Ottoman section.
128. Atasoy and Uluç (2012).
129. Görünür (2010), pp. 14–15.
130. Information about the private museum founded by Esat Uluumay in 2004 can be found at http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uluumay_Osmanlı%C4%B1_Halk_K%C4%B1yafetleri_ve_Tak%C4%B1lar%C4%B1_M%C3%BCzesi (accessed on 26 April 2014).

Chapter 8 EARTH, WATER, AIR AND FIRE: THE GIFTS
AND PERILS OF NATURE

1. Ambraseys and Finkel (1990).
2. Faroqhi (1999).
3. Goodrich (1990), pp. 78–79. My thanks to Gottfried Hagen for indicating this source.
4. Üçok (2001).
5. Saner (2008).
6. Ahmed Refik (reprint 1988), pp. 6, 12.
7. İrepoğlu (2012).
8. Demiriz (1986), p. 370.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., p. 333.
11. Ibid., p. 304.
12. Atasoy and Raby (1989), pp. 50–52.
13. Kürkman (2005), pp. 41–43.
14. Atasoy and Raby (1989), pp. 52, 274; Kürkman (2005), p. 53.
15. Kürkman (2005), p. 52.
16. Akalın, Bilgi (1997).
17. They are found for instance in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art (Istanbul), whose treasures originate mostly from Islamic cult buildings.
18. Bakla (2007).
19. For a recent summary see Karakaş (unpublished PhD dissertation, 2013). See also the website: Jim Crow, J. Bardill and Richard Bayliss, ‘The Archaeology of Constantinople and its Hinterland’ <http://www.shca.ed.ac.uk/projects/longwalls/WaterSupply.htm> (accessed on 14 February 2014).
20. Fundamental: Çeçen (1996), richly illustrated.
21. Necipoğlu (2005), pp. 113, 141.
22. Çeçen (1984, 1986, 1988).
23. Kal’a et al (1998), vol. 1, pp. 69–70. See also the as yet unpublished work of Karakaş (2013).
24. Kal’a et al (1998), vol. 8, pp. 206–08.
25. Ergin (2015).
26. Kreiser (1975), p. 134.
27. This elegant formulation comes from Hamadeh (2007), p. 76.
28. Atıl (1999), p. 190 (Ill. No. 28).
29. Kafescioğlu (2013), p. 541.
30. Saner (2008).
31. Karahasanoğlu (2013), p. 112.
32. Behrens-Abouseif (1992).
33. Bostan (1992), pp. 94–95; Panzac (2009), pp. 162–82.
34. Faroqhi (2001).
35. Pinon (1994).
36. Et-Tamgrouti, tr. by De Castries (1929), pp. 58–59.
37. Ayalon (2014) is the most recent treatment of this problematic.
38. <http://www.greatistanbul.com/climate.htm> (accessed on 20 July 2011).

39. The most recent work is Rozen and Arbel (2006); see also the relevant chapter by Atasoy in Atasoy and Raby (1989), pp. 14–18 and for a comprehensive study, Cezar (2002), pp. 352–445.
40. Atasoy (2nd edn, 2013).
41. Andreasyan (1973), p. 73.
42. Derviş efendi-zâde Derviş Mustafa Efendi (1994), pp. 40 and 61.
43. Evliya Çelebi (2006), p. 183.
44. On Şânîzâde and his use of the writings of Voltaire compare Eldem (2013).
45. Faroqhi (forthcoming a).
46. Şânîzâde (2008), vol. 2, p. 851.
47. Selânikî Mustafa Efendi (1989), vol. 1, p. 221.
48. Evliya Çelebi (1999), vol. 2, pp. 70–72.
49. Gölpinarlı (1958), pp. 69–71.
50. Ambraseys and Finkel (1990), p. 168.
51. Ambraseys and Finkel (1995), pp. 75–76.
52. Ambraseys and Jackson (2000).
53. Mazlum (2011) with abundant archival and archaeological data.
54. Milstein (1990). Ill. No. 7.
55. İrepoğlu (2012), pp. 21–23.
56. Mehmed Ubeydî, ‘Netayicü’l-ezhar veya Çiçekçiler Tezkiresi’ (İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi T3923), dated to 1699. For information concerning the date <http://www.turkislamsanatları.com/tezhib/laletarihi2.asp> (accessed on 11 May 2014). Demiriz (2009) has made extensive use of this source.
57. Kahraman (2015a), p. 29; Kahraman (2015b), p. 20.
58. Demiriz (2009), p. 37.
59. Kahraman (2015a), p. 29; Kahraman (2015b), p. 20.
60. Karahasanoğlu (n.d.).
61. Ayverdi (2006), p. 14.
62. Recep et al (2010), pp. 120, 165–70.
63. Demiriz (2009), pp. 28–29 Ayverdi (2011), p. 23.
64. Demiriz (2009), p. 76.
65. Hezarfenn (May 1995).
66. Mehmed Lalezari (1814). I owe this reference to Babinger (1913). For a summary of Mehmed Lalezari’s criteria compare Demiriz (2009), pp. 38–40.
67. Demiriz (2009), p. 42.
68. Kahraman (2015a); Kahraman (2015b).
69. Demiriz (2009), p. 7.
70. Ibid., pp. 4 and 26. Demiriz has not detailed the dates and current whereabouts of the images that she has published, perhaps the work of a painter named Mehmed whose work is in a private collection (p. 7).
71. For a rare example: Ayverdi (2006), p. 33.
72. Demiriz (2009), p. 15.
73. Busbecq (1994), p. 43, note 64.
74. İrepoğlu (2012), pp. 44–49.

75. Museum number: 232-1876. Information derived from <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O86656/vase-unknown/> (accessed on 21 February 2015).
76. Ayverdi, ed. by Derman (2006), pp. 47 and 62.
77. The internet description provided by the Hood Museum, Hanover NH is the following: 'Object No.: C.971.42: Panel of Tiles from a Public Fountain (cheshme, dated 1013/1604-05). Materials: Polychrome under-glaze-painted ceramic tile.' <https://piction.dartmouth.edu/icons/images/oc/index.html?url=1508046346ZZEBQEZNPHMGd18009850> (accessed on 18 May 2014). Sheila Blair has discussed this panel in Blair and Bloom (1991), pp. 71–72.
78. Raby (1977–78) has posited the existence of workshops producing tiles in the İznik style during the second half of the sixteenth century. My thanks to Sheila Blair, Walter Denny, and Tülay Artan for directing me to this publication. However, the tilework catalogue in Raby's article does not include the present panel.
79. Blair and Bloom (1991), p. 71, cat. no. 5, colour plate, frontispiece.
80. Montagu (1993), pp. 88–91.
81. The section on censers completely depends on Ergin (2014). On the perfuming of the Sultan see p. 74; for this gesture concerning a *bailo*, see Hanß (2014), p. 41.
82. Ergin (2014), p. 73.
83. Evliya (2006), p. 286.
84. Evliya (2006), p. 262.
85. The employees of the customs office also marked the day by sprinkling rosewater: Evliya (2006), p. 297.
86. Kreiser (1975), pp. 236–37.
87. My thanks go to Amanda Phillips for this information.
88. For a colour photograph see Carswell (1995), p. 103, No. 125.
89. Akalın and Bilgi (1997), p. 42.
90. Ünal ed. (2001), pp. 306–07, Ill. 143 and 145.
91. Atıl (1999), p. 134 (Ill. No. 56). Amanda Phillips has kindly made me aware of a tiled hearth at the V&A dated 1731: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O106607/fireplace-unknown/>.
92. Ünal ed. (2001), p. 266, Ill. 63.
93. Sabján and Végh (2003), the work of these two authors forms the basis of the present section.
94. Braudel (1979), vol. 1, p. 262; Roche (2000), pp. 127–28.
95. Smith and Christian (1984), pp. 16–17.
96. Sabján and Végh (2003), p. 295.
97. Ibid., p. 296.
98. Roche (2000), pp. 127–28.
99. 'Memorie turche' (MS Cicogna 1971, fol. 34–34b). Biblioteca del Museo Civico Correr, Venice.
100. Rothman (2012), pp. 68–78.
101. Ibid., p. 68.
102. Pamukciyan (June 1988) and (March 1990).
103. Andreasyan (1973); Çabuk ed. (March 1973).
104. Andreasyan (1973), p. 73.

105. *Ibid.*, pp. 72–73.
106. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
107. Çabuk ed. (March 1973).
108. Et-Tamgrouti, tr. by De Castries (1929), pp. 58–59.
109. Von Diez (1815), vol. 2, pp. 1–3.

CONCLUSION

1. Perot, Hitzel and Anhegger eds (2001); for a parallel in a European Renaissance setting and the changes an object might undergo, see Rublack (2013).
2. Habib (2008), pp. 94–95.
3. Bilgin (2006), pp. 168–69.
4. Carswell (2006), p. 108, No. 86.
5. Slot (1975–76), p. 48.
6. Koller (2008), pp. 183–84. Evliya Çelebi also reported that among other things, ‘Arab’ goods were available in Sarajevo at low prices (*ibid.*, p. 186).
7. Waraich (2011).
8. Saner (2008).
9. İrepoğlu (1999), p. 170.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 176–77 has stressed the Iranian inspiration of these figures, which she attributes to stories about Persians Levni may have read, but also to an album of the 1600s available in the Topkapı Palace.
11. Evliya Çelebi (2006), p. 229.
12. Raby, Necipoğlu, Çağman and Bağcı (2000).
13. *Ibid.*, p. 230.
14. Sint Nicolaas, Renda, İrepoğlu and Bull (2004), p. 71; most recently: Bevilacqua and Pfeifer (2013).
15. Atasoy (1986), pp. 24–25.
16. Atasoy (1986), p. 29.
17. Hostetler (2005).
18. Atasoy (1997); Atıl (1999).
19. Once again: my thanks to Marinos Sariyannis.
20. Ferris (2012), pp. 21–22.
21. Petrovsky (2014) has studied this question with relation to texts.
22. Bir, Acar and Kaçar (2012).
23. Sabján and Végh (2003), p. 296.
24. Establet (2015).
25. Kançal Ferrari (2005).
26. Atasoy and Uluç (2012).
27. On the importation of Ottoman fabrics into Poland see Biedrońska-Słota (2014), pp. 87–89; for sashes see Ölçer (2014), pp. 306–10.
28. Bevilacqua and Pfeifer (2013).
29. Once again: Atasoy and Uluç (2012).

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Some editions of primary sources may contain detailed introductions, while some secondary studies contain text editions; therefore the separation is to some extent artificial.

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PLATE 0 A Holbein carpet.



PLATE 1 Roman gravestone.



PLATE 2 Tile-work panel showing Mecca (seventeenth century).



PLATE 3 Iranian inspirations: a prayer carpet with curvilinear design.



PLATE 4 Indian war elephant in Belgrade.



PLATE 5 Chinese porcelain coffee cups.



PLATE 6 Pistols from central Europe in the Ottoman Empire.

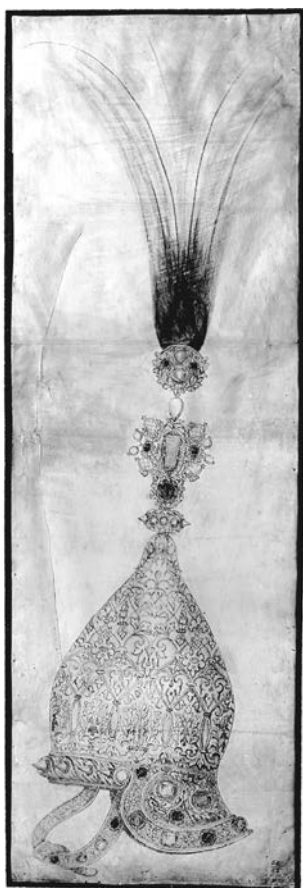


PLATE 7 Sketch for a helmet 'made in Venice', briefly worn by Süleyman the Lawgiver.



PLATE 8 Portrait of Sultan Mehmed III.



PLATE 9 An Ottoman ambassador in India.



PLATE 10 Painting of Mehmed IV.



PLATE 11 A portrait of Mahmud II.



PLATE 12 A young Ottoman gentleman (Levni) and a Bursa woman (Levni).

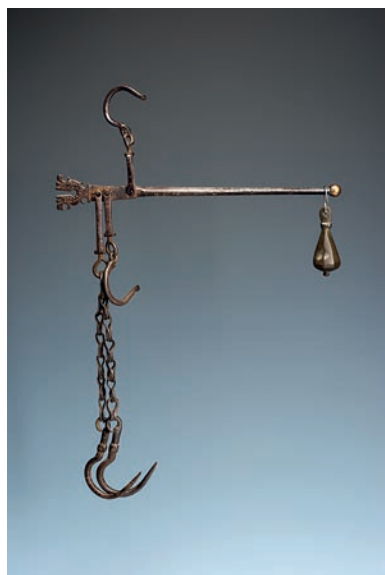


PLATE 13 Weighing scales and weights.



PLATE 14 A peasant family.



PLATE 15 Faience plate showing a captive.



PLATE 16 Tile-work panel from 1727.



PLATE 17 Church silver plate (Orthodox-Ottoman).



PLATE 18 Armenian church textile hanging.



PLATE 19 Top: A well-to-do Jewish woman. Bottom: Jewish woman in a black gown and white scarf.



PLATE 20 A helmet, supposedly once owned by Mehmed Sokollu.



PLATE 21 A *matara* gifted to Rudolf II by Murad III.



PLATE 22 A *bozdoğan*, gift from Istanbul to M. Apafy, the last prince of Transylvania.



PLATE 23 *Tuğ*.



PLATE 24 A luxurious tent.



PLATE 25 A drawing of the 1699 border (Luigi Fernando Marsigli).



PLATE 26 Coffee cup.



PLATE 27 A *sofra*.



PLATE 28 Festive plate.



PLATE 29 Decorated wooden spoons.



PLATE 30 A turban and its support.



PLATE 31 An eighteenth-century woman's dress.



PLATE 32 A leather caftan from the 1600s or 1700s.



PLATE 33 A pair of shoes, covered in silk.



PLATE 34 A church textile, in the Bursa style.



PLATE 35 A Lotto carpet.



PLATE 36 EARTH: A tulip in a garden (İznik vase).



PLATE 37 WATER: Faience panel from a çeşme.



PLATE 38 AIR: A rosewater sprinkler.

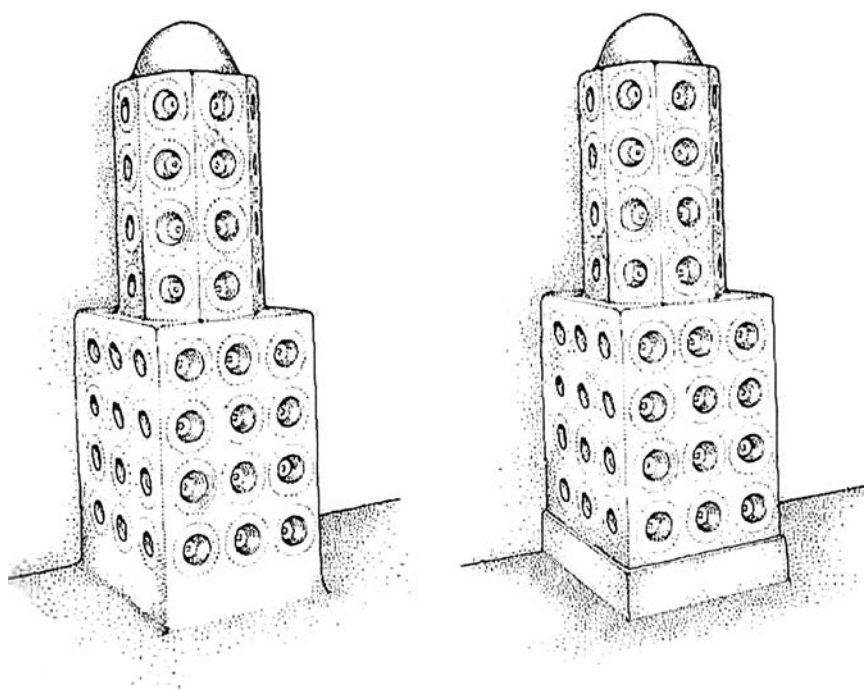


PLATE 39 FIRE: A Bosnian-style stove, with and without a 'foot'.



PLATE 40 A fire in Istanbul.

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